OPEN WITH CAMERA inside the apartment of Gabe and Judy Roth.

They are dressing for dinner out but not fancy.

The TV is on, Gabe touring the channels while dressing.

Bookish surroundings, he teaches at Columbia and she works for an antiques magazine.

CAMERA will always be HAND-HELD for film and the cutting crude and functional, jump cutting when necessary.

The impression should be given that the characters in the film always have a camera present.

It goes in and out of focus, zooms unashamedly and often is on the wrong person.

Sometimes characters will look directly into the lens.

There should be much ad-libbing and the script is meant to give an idea of the story. Some dialogue in the script is good, some jokes are worth keeping, but real behavior is more important.

If a scene runs too long we can just jump out the middle unashamedly. In fact, it would almost be more wise to use two hand held cameras and paste material together as it suits the narrative.

Perhaps the first thing we see is on the TV and the program is on Einstein -- I saw a documentary on him last week -- a noted scientist is quoting Einstein -- He says Einstein said, "God doesn't play dice with the universe."

Gabe says sarcastically, "No, he just plays hide and seek." And he turns the dial --

Judy ad-libs about Jack and Sally being there about seven-thirty and she doesn't know if Gabe needs a tie at this particular restaurant.

Gabe has turned on one of those Pat Buchanan style cable news forums where somebody like Buchanan if not he himself is questioning the holocaust.

Gabe sarcastically remarks: "This guy's unbelievable. He thinks Auschwitz was a theme park."

He turns dial and we get a comment on TV about education and teaching literature and/or writing, perhaps black studies. We can find something suitable.

GABE
You can't teach writing. The more years pass I'm convinced. You can only expose them to the best literature and hope ... the ones that can write can write when they come to me -- it's in the genes ...

JUDY
You lose patience if the student is not Dostoevsky or Joyce.

GABE
No.

JUDY
Well ...

GABE
And yet every now and then I get a pupil ... a girl showed me a short story this week ... She's Ellen's age ... it was called: Oral Sex In The Age of Deconstruction -- it was so insightful about people who couldn't love -- and yet it was genuinely romantic ... a twenty year old to have that depth and to be able to express it movingly -- you have to be born with it ... What am I teaching? I'm teaching nothing ... There's no such thing as structure ...

JUDY
Let's decide with Jack and Sally about New Year's Eve.

GABE
Let's just go to their house. It's pretty up there and it'll just be us four and we can relax, open a bottle of wine and look out over the Hudson ...

JUDY
You don't want to go to Josh's party?

GABE
What for? A room full of opinions? And drunk opinions --

JUDY
It'll be fun. I know Sally would like
(MORE)

JUDY (contd)
to -- come on, it's New Year's Eve -- we'll go someplace nice to dinner --

GABE
Our best New Year's with Jack and Sally have been the quiet ones -- Sneeden's Landing -- in Montauk ...

JUDY
Don't you want a little excitement?

GABE
It's amateur night -- all the suckers are out ...

JUDY
It's so dead when we all sit around -- I mean it's nice to be with friends but we have a lot of quiet nights with them. New Year's Eve is meant to be up.

GABE
You're like a kid -- you never outgrew partying on New Year's Eve -- you like all that noise --

JUDY
Listen, someday they'll be pushing us around in wheelchairs -- or worse -- so let's make a little noise while we're not decrepit.

Bell rings.

GABE
Now what is this, Vietnamese food?

JUDY
Thai food.

GABE
Is that minced dog?

JUDY
I think they've gotten tired of our pasta places.

Jack and Sally enter.

There is a forced, very slightly manic, upbeat quality in their attitudes. Overcompensating.

Ad-lib about traffic on the GW Bridge or the weather.

GABE
Can't convince you guys to hit a nice simple Italian restaurant -- you definitely want Cambodian desserts ...

SALLY
We want to tell you something.

JUDY
What?

SALLY
Jack and I are splitting up.

GABE
Is that all? ... You're kidding of course.

JACK
No, we discussed it and we both think it's for the best.

JUDY
What are you talking about? This is insane.

JACK
We don't want to make a big thing about it because we're both fine.

GABE
Wait a minute -- this is crazy -- I have to sit down --

JUDY
Don't tell me you're not joking because I'm going to cry.

SALLY
We're fine -- we're both fine.

JACK
We both decided.

SALLY
It's mutual.

JUDY
What do you mean?

JACK
We'll tell you at dinner.

JUDY
Look, I'm not going out to dinner.

GABE
Since when? What's going on?

SALLY
It's something we've discussed for awhile now --

JACK
With no hostility --

GABE
But why?

JUDY
Well look, Gabe -- it's none of our business.

JACK
Don't make it seem tragic -- it's not -- it's a very positive step for both of us.

GABE
What are you talking about? You're Jack and Sally -- you have kids ...

JACK
They're in college. We've discussed it with them. They understand.

SALLY
I don't want to bore you with the details --

JUDY
I can't get my mind around this. You seem to get along so well.

GABE
Have you met other people?

JUDY
It's none of our business, Gabe -- I just feel sick ...

JACK
Don't -- really -- we didn't mean to ruin anything -- Sally and I have discussed it and we both feel we'd like to see what it's like apart.

SALLY
Don't not support us because we've finally gotten the nerve to do it.

GABE
You'll be back together in a week -- this is crazy.

JACK
Sally's going to stay on at Sneeden's and I'm going to take a place in the city.

JUDY
Well, I'm just shattered.

SALLY
Now come on -- let's eat.

JUDY
What do you mean, come on? I can't eat.

SALLY
Don't get angry.

JUDY
I'm not angry.

SALLY
You are angry.

JUDY
You just march in and tell us you're breaking up -- you've raised two kids together -- Why are you splitting up?

GABE
It really isn't our business.

JUDY
They're our closest friends. Why isn't it our business?

JACK
There's no reason -- there's no traumatic event -- people grow apart -- a lot of little personal things --

JUDY
(storming into next room)
Look, I don't want to hear this bullshit.

GABE
Judy!

JACK
Why is she so upset?

SALLY
Because she cares about us.

GABE
(calling to other room)
I care about you too. Judy!

JACK
We're not sad. We both want to.

GABE
Judy -- what are you carrying on?

JUDY
I'm upset, ok? Can't I be upset?

SALLY
I've discussed it with a therapist.

JUDY
You have? You never said a word.

GABE
You just said it was not our business.

JUDY
But we're all so close -- or I thought we were.

JACK
Can we please not make this into a wake.

GABE
Why are you taking it so personally?

SALLY
I think we should have dinner as planned and get off the topic.

CUT TO: Interview with Judy.

INT.
Why were you so upset?

JUDY
I don't know -- I really don't know.

INT.
It was a total shock?

JUDY
Completely -- and they were so casual about it ... They didn't seem to be appropriately upset ...

INT.
Were you hurt because Sally never mentioned anything to you?

JUDY
If I look back and really search hard, now and then when we were together she may have made an occasional remark about -- wondering what it would be like to be single with all she'd learned, experienced ... She never said a negative word about Jack -- again I'm reaching ...

INT.
What?

JUDY
Their sex life may have fallen off ...

INT.
She told you that?

JUDY
No -- I'm groping here for clues -- now and then she'd make a joking comment -- an ironic comment -- but she never mentioned anything -- I think she loved him and --

INT.
Before we go on, can you tell us something about yourself -- so we know who you are?

JUDY
I'm Judy Roth -- married to Gabe -- I work for a magazine -- an antiques journal -- we've been married six years -- we had no children although I have a daughter from a previous marriage -- I married an architect when I was young -- didn't work out -- nobody's fault --

CUT TO: The foursome at dinner as her V.O. continues.

JUDY V.O. (contd)
Y'know, we did go out to dinner that night, believe it or not -- it was so strained -- for me -- the others seemed to mind less ...

CAMERA HAS CIRCLED their faces at table and CONTINUES IN A CUT which walks with them down the street.

JUDY V.O. (contd)
I don't know. I guess I tend to get emotional. Gabe is always calmer -- he hides a lot behind wit ... he's got a sarcastic view of life which can be quite funny but it can also get on your nerves ... That night had an unreal quality to it.

CUT TO: Gabe and Judy alone at home in bedroom.

GABE
You ok?

JUDY
I'm a little dizzy.

GABE
You drank the most wine.

JUDY
It's not the wine. I feel giddy.

GABE
It's amazing -- you think you're so friendly with people and so close -- and you really don't know what they're thinking.

JUDY
It's scarey that things can be percolating under the surface and suddenly they come up.

GABE
I guess you can never get too secure.

JUDY
Do you ever hide things from me?

GABE
Me? What kind of things?

JUDY
Feelings. Longings -- complaints --

GABE
No. Do you?

JUDY
No ... Sometimes ...

GABE
Really? Like what?

JUDY
I don't know ... you know how you can be so critical ... we've had this conversation ...

GABE
You are in a down mood tonight.

JUDY
(hugging him)
No -- I'm sorry ... So you never had an inkling from Jack? You two are so close ...

GABE
When we were having dinner tonight I did think back to one story Jack told me about him and Peter Styles from his office.

CUT TO: Past cut.

PETE
Trust me, Jack, it's to die. Her name is Shawn Grainger. She's built like this. It'll be the greatest time you've ever had in your life. I'm telling you -- at two hundred bucks she's a bargain.

JACK
I don't want to sleep with a whore. What about AIDS?

PETE
She's not a streetwalker -- she's a high class call girl. I promise you -- you won't be sorry. Anything you want to do -- plus she's got friends.

JACK
No. I wouldn't do that to my wife and it's dangerous.

PETE
Hey, you were the one that told me you weren't having a good sex life.

JACK
Listen, at a two martini lunch I'll exaggerate anything.

PETE
Mouth like velvet -- she was a former Miss Something or other.

JACK
What'd I say at lunch?

PETE
You said Sally was cold and you'd give anything to fuck your aerobics trainer.

JACK
I should never drink at lunch ...

The number is left with him as Pete gives up. Jack ponders it but throws it in waste basket.

CUT TO: Interview with Shawn, a beautiful call girl.

SHAWN
He called me -- I had the impression it was about a month or so after he had my number -- he was very polite on the phone -- a little tense -- I can always tell the ones who haven't had experience. He gave me some fake name. He wanted to meet me at the Americana Hotel -- and when I got there he was very nice -- very gentlemanly -- and nervous -- we sat around for a long time. I don't mind. It's part of the job ... I never like to rush anybody ... this was really long -- over an hour ... Finally I remember I moved us into the bedroom -- and I don't know how it happened but we were talking and he said his name was not really John Adams -- and I told him my name was not Shawn Grainger, it was really Natalie Feldman and that I was Jewish -- and that just stopped
(MORE)

SHAWN (contd)
him short -- he couldn't go through with the sex ... couldn't get it up ...

SHOT of him ushering her out of hotel room.

SHAWN V.O.
Before I left he experienced some terrible pains in the chest ... I thought he might be having a heart attack but it passed.

CUT BACK from hotel room where Jack had chest pains to interview.

INT.
And that was the last you saw of him?

SHAWN
No -- he called me again about two months later -- and I saw him at the same hotel and this time he slept with me -- and then I saw him fairly regularly -- every two, three weeks. He said he had seen a psychiatrist and worked out his problems. I couldn't make it once and sent a girl friend and then he started seeing her and me -- alternating -- I don't know ... But to both of us he was always very nice -- he was kind and generous and very sweet ... we both liked him ... I had the impression his wife may have been a little frigid ... but I don't know ... then neither of us ever saw him again ...

CUT BACK TO: Gabe and Judy in bed.

JUDY
So he threw away the phone number and never used it.

GABE
To the best of my knowledge. He's not the hooker type. He's always a little straight ...

JUDY
So Sally's cold in bed ...

GABE
Doesn't surprise me -- she's so cerebral. I'm surprised you guys never discussed it.

JUDY
I guess she tells me what she wants.
(pause)
Am I cold in bed?

GABE
You? -- No -- you're not cold.

JUDY
But I am inhibited. You said it yourself.

GABE
That was years ago -- we had a minor incident which you blew up into a major confrontation.

JUDY
Have you ever had the urge to sleep with a whore?

GABE
Me? No. Yeah. When I was college age. You're so provocative tonight. Jack and Sally's breakup's really thrown you.

JUDY
You think we'd ever break up?

GABE
It's nothing I'm planning. Are you?

JUDY
No -- on the other hand -- I don't know exactly how I'll feel if you persist in not wanting to make me pregnant.

GABE
You have a wonderful daughter.

JUDY
I want another.

GABE
It's so cruel to bring another life into this terrible world.

JUDY
Don't glorify your refusal on philosophical grounds.

GABE
(hugging her)
Hey, what's wrong with you tonight?

JUDY
Shall we make love?

GABE
Yes -- if we can take a minute and get into it -- rather than just on command.

JUDY
We can get into it.
(kisses him)

GABE
You should put on your diaphragm.

JUDY
Ok.

GABE
You'd never tell me you have it on and not.

JUDY
What a stupid thing to say. You trust no one. No wonder you're criticized for cynicism.

GABE
I'm sorry ... c'mere ... I'm just exhausted.

JUDY
Well, we don't have to do it.

GABE
Don't get touchy -- it <u>is</u> one a.m.

JUDY
Are you still attracted to me?

GABE
Sure.

JUDY
But we do it less and less.

GABE
Well, our schedules haven't exactly been conducive ...

JUDY
(good naturedly)
Oh bullshit -- when we wanted to, we found time -- at dinner parties, in other people's bathrooms ...

GABE
Which you didn't enjoy as I recall -- too tense -- all those eating sounds in the dining room ...

JUDY
Are you ever attracted to other women?

GABE
Like who?

JUDY
Like any of those young women in your classes who have all that insight and talent and undoubtedly worship you? ...

GABE
You think those girls want an old man?

JUDY
I think an old man does better than an old woman.

GABE
(kissing her)
Then I guess we're stuck with each other.

JUDY
Default.
(kiss)

GABE
Could be worse.

JUDY
It <u>is</u> one a.m. ... my God ...

CUT TO: Interview with Gabe.

GABE
Gabe Roth.

INT.
Tell us a little about yourself.

GABE
What can I say? I teach writing at Columbia. I enjoy it. I was a writer during the seventies. I don't know if you read any of my stuff -- I wrote some short stories that were pretty well acclaimed ...

INT.
Why'd you stop?

GABE
Couldn't meet my own standards ... I didn't want to be mediocre and I knew I wasn't Dostoevsky or Joyce ...

INT.
That's almost petulant.

GABE
I wasn't enjoying it. I was hard work and lonely and I'd had a bad love affair. I don't know. I'm a better teacher. I like it more ... I like working with young talent ... helping them form ... to the small degree I can ...

INT.
Judy's your first wife?

GABE
Yes ... although I've lived with women on and off. This has not been my strong point. It's my fault, I'm sure.

INT.
Why'd you finally pick Judy to marry?

GABE
Because she's a wonderful person. She's decent and intelligent and humane. Y'know, in Streetcar when Stella asks Blanche if she wants Mitch, Blanche says: I want to rest. And I wanted to rest. To have a real life with a real woman.
(MORE)

GABE (contd)
I'd had some pretty intense love affairs and the sheer carnage was getting me down.

CUT TO SHOT of a distraught Sally, dressed up, exits her house, into car, pulls off burning rubber.

INT. V.O.
Sally had a dinner date with Paul, a colleague at work who had always liked her.

OVERLAP Paul in his apt. readying. She enters extremely distraught -- ad-lib hellos -- he bright and cheery -- she trying but tense, her mind elsewhere.

PAUL
I thought we'd have a drink and I was able to get seats to Don Giovanni ... Are you ok?

SALLY
Yes.

PAUL
What would you like?

SALLY
Anything -- white wine.

PAUL
I hear the staging of this opera is not to be believed.

She's so tense, as he pours her some wine, she spills some.

SALLY
Oh, excuse me -- can I use the phone?

PAUL
Of course. You're all right?

SALLY
Yes. I'm looking forward to it.

PAUL
David Hockney did the sets -- you want it private?

SALLY
Just for a minute.

PAUL
Of course.

She gets private but not out of earshot. Paul is a little bewildered.

SALLY
(into phone)
It's me ... you're living with her, aren't you?! You've moved in together! ... Don't lie to me, Jack -- you're living with someone! ... Because I know ... because I do -- yes -- I heard ... Don't give me that shit! It's been three fucking weeks! How did you meet someone so fast!? Bullshit -- you had to have known her before! ... Bullshit! Don't -- don't give me that shit -- you're in love? ... So fast? ... I don't fucking believe it -- you were seeing whoever it is all along! Of course I expected things to happen but not so fast -- are you <u>that</u> sure? ... No -- I'm not. Well, it's just fucking, dishonest, bullshit!

Slams down phone. Returns to room with Paul who heard all.

PAUL
Listen, if you're having some kind of personal thing --

SALLY
No, it's all right.

PAUL
Really --

SALLY
(a tad snappy)
It's ok! ... really -- I'm looking forward to tonight. <u>What</u> are we seeing?

PAUL
<u>Don Giovanni</u>.

SALLY
A Don Juan story.

PAUL
I can only think of it as Mozart.

SALLY
Fucking Don Juans -- they should have cut his fucking dick off.

PAUL
Would you like some more wine?

SALLY
Please.

PAUL
We don't have to go.

SALLY
No -- I'm not going to put my life on hold. I've been dying to see this opera ... Excuse me one second.

She goes to phone in other room as Paul pours himself another drink, still exposed to her conversation.

SALLY (contd)
(into phone)
Hello -- it's me again -- I know who she is. Bullshit. It's Gale ... of course it's Gale ... She's been after you since she joined the firm ... you two like that sports bullshit ... Don't lie to me, Jack! ... Of course it's Gale ... she's exactly what you like ... she's got that dark look -- and she's bright and all that fucking Princeton bullshit ... No -- no -- no -- I thought it was an experiment ... I didn't think it was final ... I didn't realize you were having an affair ... Yeah, well, that's bull-shit and I don't buy a fucking word of it.
(slams down phone, returns)
What time do we have to be there?

PAUL
Listen, I can't do this ... I'm feeling upset ...

SALLY
What are you upset about? Fucking men -- a woman gets to be over forty, it becomes a different ballgame ...

PAUL
Not really.

SALLY
Don't defend your sex. It's true. You're great till you start to show your age, then they want a newer model.

PAUL
Sally -- you're a very attractive woman -- for any age.

CUT TO: Sally being interviewed.

SALLY
It was a terrible blow to my ego ... I thought he loved me still ... you know, that we were experimenting ...

INT.
But if you had met someone first ...

SALLY
Probably right ... probably would have done the same thing ... I had fantasized about being single many times ... Over the years you build up a lot of frustrations ... baggage ... it's hard to keep the marriage going smoothly ... I don't know ...

CUT TO: Pretty, elegant, young lawyer as Sally's V.O. continues.

SALLY V.O.
Gale came to work in his office the year before ... and I met her several times ... and she was always calling him at home. Look, she's perfect for him. She's highly intelligent, cultivated -- it's what he likes.

SHOT of Gale over their house.

SALLY V.O. (contd)
She was over the house a few times -- she loved my taste in everything ... and she even dressed like me a little ...

CUT BACK TO: Sally in int. chair.

SALLY
What can I say? She's me but she's younger.

CUT TO: Gabe.

SHOT of young, lovely female talking privately to him at head of classroom which is empty.

GABE
Oral Sex In The Age of Deconstruction is remarkable ... I'm amazed at your perceptions -- and the grace of your prose.

RAIN
I'm blushing, right? My face is all hot ... Or I may just cry ... Really -- your approbation means more to me than anybody's in the world ... The first short story I ever read that made me want to write was yours, The Grey Hat. We used to quote it at home -- "Giving up his hopes, compromising his dreams, was like putting on a grey hat. He could feel the lid eventually slip down over his eyes and all he wanted to do was sleep."

GABE
And that was one of my more optimistic stories.

RAIN
Oh but they were so funny. I never knew why you didn't write anymore ... Listen to me -- you can hear my heart beating -- I can't take a compliment -- and from you ...

GABE
Where'd you get that name?

RAIN
My parents named me after Rilke. He's my mother's favorite poet.

GABE
With a name like Rain Taylor you have to be a writer. It's like Youngblood Hawke.

RAIN
It's Rainer on my birth certificate but everyone calls me Rain.

GABE
What do your parents do?

RAIN
My father's an investment banker and Mom works for Lincoln Center.

GABE
Uh-huh ...

RAIN
Y'know, I started a diet today and I'm a little light headed, combined with the euphoria of your liking my story -- it's made me a little high so if I seem strange ...

GABE
Where are you from?

RAIN
New York ... Park Avenue and Seventy-Fifth.

GABE
Are you an only child?

RAIN
All these questions --

GABE
I'm sorry. You're probably starving -- Why are you on a diet?

RAIN
No, no -- keep asking. I love the attention. Actually I may have a granola bar which I'm allowed --
(her bag is like someone's attic)

GABE
Where did you get all those insights at your age? Have you suffered a lot? Were you married and divorced several times? Are your parents stormy, tempestuous types?

RAIN
(laughing)
All the Taylors are stormy, tempestuous types. No, I have no real insights ... it's a trick I have. When I was
(MORE)

RAIN (contd)
ten I wrote very convincingly about Paris and I'd never been there.

GABE
I'd love to see whatever else you have. Are you prolific?

RAIN
Y'know, I don't really believe one can teach writing. I think you can inspire. That was the reason I took this course. To meet you. And this experience today will do more for my confidence than hours of theory on plot construction or dialogue ... I'm not prolific ... it doesn't come easy to me ... I labor over it ... God, is it four-thirty? I have to go. I'm inspired.

Gabe is pleased. WE FOLLOW her down hall. She's upbeat and we

CUT TO: Gabe interview.

GABE
There are professors I know -- and good ones -- who are notorious for seducing all their female pupils ... it's not very hard to have affairs with them ... they look up to you, they want to learn, they're so flattered ... I've never done it ... As I said, I've had sexy daydreams staring at some of them ... I don't know ... I've never cheated on Judy ... and I wouldn't ... I never cheated on any of the women I was involved with ... one. Years ago. I was living with a spectacular, brilliant woman -- a crazy -- Harriet Harmon ... She was great but nuts -- an art groupie ... she hung out with all those famous downtown painters -- she had a great eye for talent in the rough -- she was high strung -- she used to cut her wrists once a year ... it was like a ritual ... She was in the hospital ... recuperating from suicide attempt number four --
(MORE)

GABE (contd)
overdose of birth control pills -- almost sterilized herself to death, I used to joke -- I was alone with her sister and it just happened.

Let me tell you about Harriet ... I'm almost ashamed to say this: she was the great love of my life. She was smart and fun most of the time and then she'd sort of zone out ... and imagine everyone hated her -- or that she was obese ...

I met her and loved her instantly ... It was a very passionate relationship.

SHOT of Harriet. Then:

GABE (contd)
We did it everywhere ... like two animals ... you had to put a hose on us.

We'd be at a party, behind the bushes, in a car with friends with a coat over our laps, she took my hand and put it between her legs ... She had me take the most erotic Polaroids of her -- pornographic -- she insisted we try it with another woman -- then she wanted two other women (I was really learning the sexual ropes). Then she'd want me and two women and just when she'd have her orgasm she'd break an amyl nitrate and inhale it ... She's in an institution today ... But she was great. I know it sounds crazy -- See, here's my problem. I was trying to explain this before ...

I've always been attracted to female kamikaze pilots. I call them kamikazes because they crash their planes and kill themselves but they crash it on you and you die with 'em.

Very bright women, charming, sexy but screwed up -- and for some reason I find them so fascinating.
(MORE)

GABE (contd)
Improbable romances at times impossible -- and I always sense the challenge going and I loved it ...

Melinda Kramer -- actress -- big talent -- full of emotion -- gorgeous. I had her eating out of my hand till one day I looked up and noticed she ate my hand. I was living with her, she was sleeping with everybody in the Manhattan phone book including the Yellow Pages -- and I loved her.

Sue Abel. Jewish intellectual -- a genius -- a joy to talk to her. Translated Proust, translated Stendahl, translated Flaubert. I went with her for three years -- let me tell you, her lithium bill could pay for the space program.

Jennifer Gilpin who I asked to marry me. She had no money -- lost thirty thousand dollars in a poker game -- ten of it mint -- an anthropologist playing with gamblers ... but when it was great, it was great. With all these women their candles burned white hot.

I don't know what it is. Some kind of misguided romantic streak. Whenever a friend would warn me -- she's trouble -- she's engaged -- she likes only women -- some scenario writes itself in my head. Suddenly the situation obeys all the dramatic requirements for something special -- a different and out of the ordinary passion -- it has an aesthetic correctness -- it's the stuff of drama and after all, I'm a writer.

CUT TO: Sally, Judy, Gabe walking in park.

GABE V.O.
Anyhow, a few weeks after Jack and Sally split, he and I didn't speak much -- he was elusive. We spent more time with Sally. She was depressed and we tried to cheer her up.

JUDY
How are the kids taking it all?

SALLY
They're fine. They're great. Paul has been accepted by Harvard Law School and Lily has a boy friend -- but it's lonely -- the big house.

GABE
You've gotta get a place in town.

SALLY
I know ... it's scarey sleeping alone -- and there's been a series of burglaries ... the house next to mine was robbed and nearby -- while the people were home ... lucky for them they didn't wake up. Everytime there's a noise I jump.

They run into Jack and a tootsie. Her name is Sam and she is anything but the dark woman his wife imagined him with.

They are all awkwardly stunned. They ad-lib hellos. This is Sam, Judy, clearly Sam knows Sally's the ex. The women check one another out.

SALLY
Well look, I have to go, I'll be late --

JUDY
We all will --

SALLY
No -- no -- no ... I'll go alone -- Taxi!

JUDY
Sally!

SALLY
Really, I have lots of appointments.
(and she's gone)

JACK
So -- it's such a coincidence.

GABE
Your name is what again? I'm sorry ...

SAM
Sam

GABE
What do you do?

SAM
Aerobics.

GABE
Oh ...

SAM
I'm a trainer -- and some nutrition.

JACK
What are you two doing? Why don't you come over for dinner?

They demur.

JACK (contd)
C'mon -- Sam's an unbelievable cook.

SAM
I am -- and it's all vegetarian. I hope you don't eat meat.

GABE
Once in a great while ...

SAM
I used to eat red meat every day and then I gave it up and then I had one recently and I just felt so totally bloated ... It's like really so bad.

JACK
Or we could order out ... there's a Mexican place that delivers ...

SAM
I flip over cous-cous.

They demur.

JACK
Do you feel like cooking?

SAM
Whatever you want.

JACK
C'mon.

SAM
We were just gonna stay in and watch the Grammys.

JACK
I can't sit through the Grammys. She watches all these dumb-fuck shows ...
(said with laughter and affection)

SAM
I have a bet with Jill on best single.

JACK
(nuzzling her)
We're not watching the Grammys. What are you doing to me.

GABE
Well, we have plans.

JUDY
Gabe's mother's in town.
(obvious lie)

GABE
Yeah -- from Miami -- she's ...

JACK
Well, one night we have to. I've been meaning to call.

JUDY
Maybe I should pick up some decaf.
(entering market)

SAM
I wonder if they have ginseng.

The ladies enter, the guys wait inside or out.

JACK
She's great ... she's got a degree in psychology ... really into the fitness thing ... nice girl ... family's from Delaware -- father's in police work.

GABE
This is what you left Sally for?

JACK
Be careful, Gabe. I'm serious about Sam.

GABE
Look, you know I love and I talk only as a friend ...

JACK
Don't start with a moralizing discourse -- you're not my rabbi.

GABE
I can't fucking believe it -- you're married for years with a family to this wonderful woman -- all right, so she's a ball-breaker sometimes -- nobody's perfect ...

JACK
Don't give me that bullshit because I know Sally and you don't.

GABE
What are you going to tell me? It better be terrible.

JACK
It's not terrible. Sally's fine ... I care about her ... I don't want to hurt her.

GABE
What are you doing with this -- cocktail waitress?

JACK
She's not. She's an educated girl. She's warm and she's nice. I can relax around her. I can breathe. Sally is hyper -- well, you know her. She's great but she's cold and she's difficult -- with her Radcliffe friends and her interior decorator -- lemme tell you, I'm bored at the fuckin' opera. She'll never go to a Giants' game with me ... we never just take it easy ... if I put a fuckin' ashtray down in the house in the wrong place -- this girl appreciates me for me.

GABE
It took you all these years ...

JACK
I should have done it long ago --
(MORE)

JACK (contd)
but there's kids ... and we're all scared to be alone ... plus I love Sally -- don't get me wrong ... What's wrong with aerobics? Am I a snob? So she's not Simone DeBeauvoir. I want to enjoy the rest of my life. I want to cuddle up with somebody. I want somebody who digs her nails into my back and screams when I fuck her. Or at least moves. I'm tired of being corrected and criticized. With Sally I'm still auditioning.

They see the women returning.

JACK (contd)
Your mother's not in town. She's in Florida.

CUT TO: Gabe and Judy at home. He leafs through a manuscript.

JUDY
Who do we know for Sally? What about Lionel?

GABE
Are you kidding? Sally's smart. Lionel's got a brain the size of a neutrino.

JUDY
You're so rough on everybody. There's no one you know at Columbia? Marty Wunderlich?

GABE
He'd hate Sally. They'd be at each other's throats. You know how she can never let a point pass undebated. And he's a self-styled expert in everything.

JUDY
I feel sorry for her. Suddenly alone.

GABE
I know. It's a blow -- but I don't know what she imagined when she and Jack decided to break up.

JUDY
Just a trial. But oviously he must have been seeing that woman before
(MORE)

JUDY (contd)
he and Sally split. Of course she's lonely and scared up in that big house alone. People don't know when they're well off. They imagine it's going to be better.

CUT TO: David, her ex-husband, int.

DAVID
Judy and I had our good moments but I think no matter how hard we would have worked our marriage wouldn't have lasted.

INT.
How long were you married to Judy?

DAVID
Five years.

INT.
Why did you part?

DAVID
At that time I thought because I wanted to -- I felt I had just run out of gas -- but when I look back I think it was really Judy who wanted out.

INT.
So <u>she</u> left <u>you</u>?

DAVID
No -- she'd never. That's not her style. See, don't let Judy fool you. She's what I call a passive aggressive. Everything is poor me -- but she gets what she wants. She's very good at playing the professional victim ... I remember well the night she met her current husband, Gabriel Roth, the writer. In the seventies he had a charismatic beginning and then burned himself out for whatever reasons ... We were in East Hampton ... some barbecue ...

CUT TO: Flashback, barbecue.

Judy and Gabe talking in crowd.

JUDY
My husband's staying out here for the week but I'm taking the train in tomorrow night. I have business.

GABE
I'll be glad to give you a lift. I'm driving in.

JUDY
Oh no -- don't be silly ... the train's fine ... would you like some food?
(offering to go to buffet)

GABE
I'll go --

JUDY
No -- don't be silly -- I'll bring you something -- how about you?

TOM
If you're going?

GABE
No, I'll get it ... you'll never manage all that ... you tell me what you want.

JUDY
Just some pasta salad.

GABE
And you?

TOM
It's ok, I'll get my own.

JUDY
I'll be able to get a cab at Penn Station.

GABE
No, it'll be dangerous. You'll get in late. I'll drive you.

JUDY
Why should you? You were going to leave earlier.

GABE
Please -- it makes no difference to me
(MORE)

GABE (contd)
-- you don't want to shlep in on the train and hunt for a cab at night ... I'll take you right to your door.

DAVID V.O.
He winds up getting the food, he changes his schedule and drives her to her door and all the while it's no, no, I'll be ok, don't help me.

CUT TO: Judy, int.

JUDY
What my ex-husband doesn't say is that for the last two years of our marriage he was virtually impotent -- when it came to me ... out of rage because I was such a disappointment to him ... he thought I'd be one thing -- his mother to be exactly -- and I couldn't take the fact that he was totally unromantic in every way -- the kind that gets you an appliance for your birthday.

CUT TO: David, int.

DAVID
No -- I never got her a Melior coffee maker for a birthday present. I got her a camera once -- and an enlarger for our anniversary but she wanted it. She asked for it.

CUT TO: Judy, int.

JUDY
I wanted a little romance in my life like everybody else. And I was still hurt when he left me. With all our problems -- but I had met Gabe. Incidentally, his description of my meeting with Gabe is not true.

SHOT of party, same thing we saw before.

JUDY V.O.
Gabe said hello and he was on the make from the word go. I did not
(MORE)

JUDY V.O. (contd)
seduce him. But I liked him right off because he was romantic.

GABE
I've been staring at you. I know it's rude.

JUDY
I'm Judy Dealy.

GABE
Gabe Roth ... you're a friend of Ira's?

JUDY
My husband is -- they work at the same agency.

GABE
Ah -- you're married. What a bad break. Happily of course ... I mean there's no chance if I said let's leave here and drive to Acapulco or something it would happen?

JUDY
It's winter in Acapulco.

GABE
If I had business cards I'd give you one and say, if you're ever single, call me -- but I don't have cards. What do you do?

JUDY
I work at a magazine.

GABE
Which one?

JUDY
Nothing very glamorous. A furniture journal.

GABE
Are you here for the summer or the week or --

JUDY
My husband's staying the week. I'm catching a train back tomorrow. I have business in the city.

GABE
Don't take the train. Let me drive you. I'm going back tomorrow.

JUDY
Don't be silly.

GABE
No, I'm serious. When do you have to be in?

JUDY
Tomorrow night.

GABE
Me too. C'mon ... I'll give you a lift back.

CUT TO: SHOT of car driving in from Hamptons.

JUDY V.O.
By the time we reached New York I was in love with Gabe.

CUT TO: Judy, int.

JUDY
I guess I was really ready.

INT.
You told your husband you wanted out?

JUDY
I was very careful not to hurt David ... very ... but Gabe was on my mind a lot ... and then one day the inevitable happened. David said that he'd had it.

CUT TO: Gabe and Judy home as this sequence began.

GABE
What are you thinking?

JUDY
I was just looking at your manuscript.

GABE
It's a lousy attempt at a novel and I should have thrown it out years ago. For some reason I pull it out every year and re-read it.

JUDY
I think it's good. You're too hard on it.

GABE
No.

JUDY
I recognize some of the incidents from what you've told me of your life.

GABE
There's some autobiography.

JUDY
There's a section which I assume is based on how we met.

GABE
The party in the Hamptons ...

JUDY
Should I be insulted?

GABE
Why?

JUDY
I don't know.

CUT TO: Same party again. Gabe and other man, Don, are looking across room at Judy.

GABE
Where? The one in red?

DON
Not that one, the one with the short hair.

GABE
Oh her. Yes -- you're right. She does look a little like Harriet. My goodness ... the cheekbones ... She's sexy.

DON
She's married to David Dealy who's really an asshole. I hear they've got problems.

GABE
That's how Harriet used to drink ...
(MORE)

GABE (contd)
she'd take a little Scotch and then a little water ... You have to introduce me to her ... she's unhappily married ...

Gabe goes over to her and we hear Judy's V.O. reading from his current manuscript.

JUDY V.O.
But she wasn't Harriet. The minute he met her the dream evaporated. The immaturity was missing -- the malicious spontaneity -- the childish brilliance, the paranoia that had kept him on edge, the sensuality that overrode the dull habits of civilization.

CUT TO: Judy present in apt. reading, confronting Gabe with incriminating description of their meeting.

GABE
(defensively)
Right. She wasn't crazy.

JUDY
No, just boring.

GABE
She's the best woman in the book. That's why he marries her.

JUDY
But he pays a price.

GABE
Because he's a shmuck.

JUDY
And don't tell me Don Freed introduced us because Don Freed wasn't even at that party.

GABE
I still don't know how you can like this book.

JUDY
I did. I really did. It's a first draft but you should be working on it. It shouldn't lay in your drawer for years.

GABE
I can't get excited over it.

JUDY
Too bad. It's full of vitality and wit.

GABE
You're prejudiced. You're my wife.

JUDY
Your dull wife.

GABE
Judy, don't in. I exaggerate for artistic effect.

JUDY
So why do you ask me to read it for an opinion? You don't care about it.

GABE
I care. I don't happen to agree. I think it's a mediocre piece of work.

JUDY
Because you don't respect my judgement. If someone else tells you the same thing you accept it.

GABE
Not true.

JUDY
Harriet Harmon could tell which painters would be great -- Oh I don't care. Who can we get for Sally? What about Lou Dillon? No. Bad idea. Neo-conservative and a dermatologist. Two strikes.

CUT TO: Voice of int. over ext. restaurant or some such. SHOT of Judy walking to it. Ext.

INT. V.O.
After a little time passed, Judy and Sally had lunch. Sally made a surprising announcement.

SALLY
I like being single.

JUDY
Really? I had the opposite impression.

SALLY
It's all anticipatory anxiety. Then you calm down and realize that being on your own is not as bad as you fantasized. It's like pulling a bad tooth. All the old festering wounds of your marriage, the disappointments, the resentments -- they're gone in one clean yank. And you're free -- you can't imagine what it's like after years of accumulating problems and swallowing one's anger to have a chance to begin again.

JUDY
I can imagine.

SALLY
The clock ticks faster for a woman so you have to do it while you still have some allure left. The one advantage of being older is having a lot of experience. I have a better shot at making things work out ... if I meet someone.

JUDY
I've often thought if Gabe and I met now, knowing all we know -- we could have a better relationship.

SALLY
Would you still marry him?

JUDY
My God, what a question.

SALLY
It's insidious how the fatal baggage of a relationship builds up -- all those little hurts slowly accumulate and one day you both look up and you're not the two moon-struck lovers you were when you met. You're two impatient grown ups and the negatives start outweighing the pleasure.

JUDY
The idea of breaking is so painful --

SALLY
You can't stay together out of fear because then you know what you become?

JUDY
What?

SALLY
My mother and father.

JUDY
I've pictured myself free.

SALLY
I know you have.

JUDY
How do you know?

SALLY
Because you got so upset when Jack and I said we were splitting. When I thought about it later I realized we must've touched a nerve. It's like Hamlet and Oedipus. You were angry that night because I did what you really want to do.

JUDY
You're over-dramatizing. Gabe and I are ok. Y'know, no one has it perfect.

SALLY
I know. Look, when it's right, nothing's better.

JUDY
So I have a possibility for you.

SALLY
Tell me.

JUDY
It's Larry Gates.

SALLY
The one you said was attractive? In your office?

JUDY
He's only been up there a few months, and I know he had a girl friend but
(MORE)

JUDY (contd)
now they've broken up. He's very attractive -- at least I think he is. He's charming and bright. I think you two would hit it off. It's worth a look. I thought you'd come back with me now. You can at least meet him. He knows nothing ... and if you're interested maybe we can all go out.

CUT TO: Exterior office building. Larry returns from lunch, entering building.

CUT TO: Women upstairs looking out window.

JUDY
That was him. Isn't he nice?

SALLY
I couldn't tell.

JUDY
Believe me, he's good. I'll introduce you.

CUT TO: The introductions.

LARRY
Hi ...

JUDY
This is Larry Gates ... Sally ... I was just getting some back issues for Sally -- she's with the landmarks preservation committee.

LARRY
I don't believe in capital punishment except for certain New York builders.

SALLY
It's not just New York. There's always just a blind passion for the new -- the young ... ahem ...

JUDY
Let me just find those copies and Xerox the articles.
(discreetly splits)

LARRY
Forgive my office. We're in the midst of putting together a full issue on German furniture styles in the twenties and thirties.

SALLY
I hate that period. I did my college thesis on Bauhaus architecture. It was called: Function and Fascism. This was years ago at Radcliffe. I got so much flack on it. It was very unpopular. Not that it won't make a good magazine subject.

LARRY
(showing photos laid out on desk)
Aren't these wonderful?

CUT TO: Later in Judy's office.

JUDY
What do you think? Isn't he sweet?

SALLY
He seems very nice.

JUDY
And I think he's sort of great looking, don't you?

SALLY
And he's single and not gay ...

JUDY
I'm telling you. He just broke up. I don't know him <u>that</u> well ... he's quiet ... That's what I like ... but he has a wonderful sense of humor -- and he's a charming drunk because at someone's birthday party up here he had a lot of whiskey and quoted poems of Yeats and was crying.

SALLY
He was?
(skeptically)
He weeps?

JUDY
In a lovely way. Shall I try and get us all together?

SALLY
You don't have to. He already asked me to lunch.

JUDY
He did?

SALLY
We were jawing away about Mies Van Der Rohe and the Nazis and it came up we both grew up in New Haven -- and then it was like old times -- and he suggested we have lunch next week. So why not? Y'never know.

JUDY
Wouldn't that be great. I'd be a matchmaker.

CUT TO: Judy, int.

JUDY
I had very odd feelings about the whole thing.

INT.
Why?

JUDY
I don't know. I was taken aback by how fast Larry had asked her to lunch ... I don't know ...

INT.
What did you hope would happen?

JUDY
Well, that -- I thought Larry would be great for Sally ... they're both sort of super bright and she's lovely and he's terrific -- no, I was glad for her.

CUT TO: Larry, int.

LARRY
I took an instant liking to Sally. I was immediately attracted to her. She said what she thought. She was sexy -- and remember, I was not looking for a relationship because I'd just broken up and I wanted time alone. I'd sworn off getting involved. But Sally -- I don't know ... there was something that just hooked in at once.

INT.
So you were grateful to Judy for introducing you to her.

LARRY
Very. It's funny. When I first came to know Judy I had the vague impression that she was flirting with me. I thought she must be unhappily married ... but er ... I met her husband. They seemed fine ... but that seems typical of Judy ... she's giving and she did me this big favor.

INT.
Why didn't your last relationship work?

LARRY
You'd have to ask Amy.

CUT TO: Amy, int.

AMY
I have only good things to say about Larry. He hasn't been lucky in love. He did nothing wrong with me -- it was one of those things -- he felt it, I didn't. I wish him luck.

CUT TO: Gabe walking on campus with Rain.

GABE
I read your other story and it's very good. I was really impressed.

RAIN
I was so worried. I was up all night with a migraine.

GABE
You have to learn to relax. I'm only one opinion.

RAIN
Yes but --

GABE
Again I thought your insight was right on the money. When one loses a love, one feels, exactly as you put it, an equal and opposite reaction to how much pleasure you've had. The physicist in your story is very amusing.

RAIN
Well, sure you like it. I sort of stole the idea of physics and love from something you once wrote.

GABE
I doubt if I'd remember what I once wrote.

RAIN
And I also took your idea about how when two people meet it's irrelevant what they choose to do because all phenomena become merely a medium through which they explore one another.

GABE
It's true. That's why when you first meet someone you like you can go on a twenty hour plane flight with them and you never notice the time.

They walk -- a pause.

RAIN
Would you ever let me read your novel?

GABE
How'd you even know I had one?

RAIN
You mentioned it the other day in class. I know you're not happy with it but it could be so valuable for me talking with you about it ... hearing what you think and why -- I'm being pushy, right? I'll shut up.

GABE
Let me think about it.

RAIN
I'm sorry ... I didn't mean to bring it up ...

GABE
(checks time)
Would you like to --

RAIN
(simultaneously)
Gee, I have to run. I'm meeting my boy friend at four.

GABE
Your who?

RAIN
My God, the time passes so quickly when I talk with you.

GABE
I didn't know you had --

RAIN
See you Monday. Have a good weekend.

GABE
Sure ... sure ...

She goes. He's conflicted. He follows her. En route he's annoyingly detained by some colleagues.

BEN
Gabe -- can I speak with you a minute?

GABE
Huh?

CHARLIE
Where you rushing?

BEN
Are you aware of what's going on with those two playwrights in Chile?

GABE
Huh? Can I call you on it?

CHARLIE
It's ugly stuff. Gabe -- Jesus, I'd have thought you'd be in the forefront.

General ad-lib frustrating his following.

GABE
Yeah -- I'll call you tonight -- must run -- I'll call ...

Continues on his quest to see who Rain is meeting. What he's like.

He sees her meet a nice young man about twenty-three.

In some clumsy way he is caught and he alibis deftly.

GABE
Oh -- hi -- I was heading the same way -- I remembered an appointment.

RAIN
Oh goodness -- Gabe Roth -- this is Carl Behrens.

Ad-libs, sizes kid up.

CARL
Happy to meet you. Rain has spoken of you often.

GABE
Yes ... well ... where you going?

RAIN
We're flying up to Boston. Some friends are getting married.

GABE
Have fun.

Ad-lib goodbyes.

CUT TO: Gabe, int.

GABE
How did I feel? I felt old. I remember when I was that age. The college girls in their fall skirts and sweaters with their hair back or up ... everybody so full of hope for the future ... I felt like having a drink.

CUT TO: The two men, Jack and Gabe at bar.

JACK
Dewars.

GABE
First, let me say I'm sorry. I was wrong to criticize you about Sam -- it was stupid and I was feeling a little bad for Sally.

JACK
To be frank, that's why I've laid low these past weeks. Not that I was insulted. I just felt that things were not going to mix well.

GABE
Lately I've been thinking about my life. When I hear old tunes -- (the one on the juke box) my eyes mist over and I start to get shortness of breath.

JACK
Is everything ok with you and Judy?

GABE
It's fine. It may not be perfect but Judy's terrific and we have a good thing ... we do ...

JACK
Who's arguing?

GABE
At some point you have to give up your childhood fantasies. Life is not a Hollywood movie. It's a foreign film.

JACK
Your tragic flaw is that the very thing that attracts you to women makes it impossible to go past a certain level. It's true. You don't appreciate Judy because she's a solid citizen -- because you <u>can</u> have a life with her -- it's the ones that you can't because they're too nuts that you find fascinating -- which provokes the question -- do you really want anything to last? Not if your choices always carry the seeds of destruction.

GABE
All right, gimme a break ... I've had experiences ... I've had psycho-analysis ... you learn something. Why do you think I married Judy?

JACK
You've said it yourself -- the heart doesn't give a shit about logic.

GABE
And how about you?

JACK
I miss Sally a little bit now and then but I think I did the right thing. This weekend --

CUT TO: Illustrating with Jack's V.O.

JACK V.O.
We got up and had a run together. And we spent the rest of the day in a tub. Y'know, part of this bathing ritual is macrobiotic food -- which is great. Christ, I've never been in better shape -- I lost twelve pounds -- And at night we rented some videos -- some crazy funny picture she insisted I see. I would never have gone near it -- Shit, Sally wouldn't have let me -- but I'll tell you, I laughed -- and I didn't have to qualify my enjoyment. Do we argue? Sure, once in awhile.

SHOT of them exiting a movie house playing Ran.

JACK
It's King Lear -- Lear -- not King Leo! Shakespeare never wrote a play about a king named Leo!

SAM
For your information Shakespeare wrote in English, not Japanese.

CUT BACK TO: The two men present in bar.

JACK
But who doesn't argue? And when those lights go out at night, it's worth it.

CUT TO: Exterior shot of Gabe's home.

INT. V.O.
That night a peculiar exchange occurred between Gabe and Judy.

She's reading a poem. He's at loose ends. He begins to fondle Judy.

JUDY
Don't race your motor, I don't have my diaphragm on.

GABE
Don't put it on.

JUDY
What are you talking about?

GABE
I don't know. I've been thinking.

JUDY
What?

GABE
That maybe I shouldn't resist having a child.

JUDY
Since when?

GABE
I don't know.

JUDY
You want a child?

GABE
Maybe it would help ... I don't know.

JUDY
What do you mean, help? What kind of therapy are you envisioning?

GABE
I don't know -- that it would center us ... in a committed way.

JUDY
Committed? Now you're thinking of that?

GABE
No -- we're committed --

JUDY
I don't think that's a good reason to have a child.

GABE
What did I say wrong? You've wanted a child for a long time.

JUDY
And you haven't.

GABE
Maybe I've been wrong.

JUDY
Obviously you think something's missing from our marriage.

GABE
Well, sometimes I do -- but not a fatal thing.

JUDY
I know what you mean, though -- we used to be happier.

GABE
Look, we have a marriage that has a lot of good things in it. Are we going through a tough period or something?

JUDY
Are you unhappy in our marriage?

GABE
Unhappy? No, I haven't thought about it for years -- which is a good sign.

JUDY
Let's be careful what we say, ok? Because words can't be taken back ... They hurt and the wound festers.

GABE
All I said was, maybe we should have a child.

JUDY
I don't think it's a great idea.

GABE
Why not?

JUDY
I don't want a child right now.

GABE
Why not?

JUDY
Because we have some straightening out to do between ourselves before we think of a child.

GABE
We had a nice evening -- dinner was pleasant -- we had a few laughs over Jack and his dopey girl friend -- although he seems nuts about her.

JUDY
Would you like somebody new?

GABE
No -- who? Would you?

JUDY
Certainly not a baby.

GABE
Forget it.

JUDY
Ok.

Pause.

GABE
Are you trying to tell me something?

JUDY
I'm just in a bad mood.

GABE
Why?

JUDY
I don't know.

GABE
Or you know but you're afraid to tell me.

JUDY
If we're not careful we're gonna get into one of those things we can't get out of.

GABE
We're just talking. Maybe I've been going along with our marriage not realizing you're unhappy -- apparently I am.

JUDY
No -- you're fine -- it's me. I'm probably getting my period.

GABE
We used to have laughs.

JUDY
You're so critical of everything. It's hard.

GABE
I have a low tolerance. I used to kid you when we met that you had a bad shit detector. You like this book and this play and this person --

JUDY
I enjoy life. Why shouldn't I?

GABE
Ok, so I guess you don't want a child.

JUDY
You know I do.

GABE
Well, then we should work on it. Right now the moment for sex is past.

JUDY
I'm sorry.

GABE
Talk about subtly getting what you want.

JUDY
I hope you're not going to say I'm manipulative. You brought it up.

GABE
Suddenly I'm begging for a kid I don't really want.

JUDY
I knew you didn't want it.

GABE
I didn't say that. Jesus. It's late. Neither of us is making any sense. Let's kiss and make up. We have a good thing. Nothing's perfect.

Kiss.

CUT TO: Judy and Larry at work next day.

JUDY
I brought you back a won-ton soup -- since you were too busy to go to lunch.

LARRY
How thoughtful. You are a sweetheart.

JUDY
(noticing tickets)
Going to Carnegie Hall tonight?

LARRY
Mahler's Ninth. I hope Sally likes Mahler.

JUDY
She'll love the ninth -- it's my favorite of all his.

LARRY
I have a wonderful place to take her to after the concert. A little supper joint run by this Italian family -- real small and out in a courtyard.

JUDY
Sounds great ...

LARRY
It is. It's funny seeing someone who's just left a long marriage. I'm sure it's been awhile since she's been romanced, so to speak.

JUDY
Yes ... I'm sure ...

LARRY
I'm such a square. I eat that stuff up -- music, late suppers, candle-light joints -- I'm a different era -- Amy used to find it a bit corny I think ...

JUDY
It's sweet ...

LARRY
Well, of course you'd go for it -- you also weep over Yeats.

CUT TO: Sally and Larry at the Mahler concert at Carnegie.

CUT TO: Larry entering her house with Sally. First ext cut.

LARRY
Tonight was fun. I loved the music.

SALLY
It was good. I usually hate Mahler. That last movement is too long. He should have cut it down. The second movement was good -- it began well -- then it gets sentimental ... but the conductor fought his way out ... Dinner was wonderful -- but I should teach the chef how to make Alfredo sauce -- it didn't quite make it. It really wasn't necessary to drive me all the way out here.

LARRY
Don't be silly. I enjoyed it.

SALLY
Please come in and have some coffee.

LARRY
Is it ok?

SALLY
Yes -- I'm only yawning because I'm hyperoxygenating because the car ride just made me a little sick.

As they enter:

LARRY
I'm sorry.

SALLY
It wasn't your fault -- your driving was fine -- for the most part. I shouldn't have had the last Margarita. Three's my limit.

LARRY
(checking out place)
It's lovely. English pine is the nicest.

SALLY
I prefer French -- my decorator screwed me. Anyhow, it's too big for one person. I have to find a place in town. Funny how your whole life changes. I'm scared out here alone -- there's been robberies.

LARRY
Do you want to get married again right away or you like being single?

SALLY
I love being single.

LARRY
Because certain personalities just need to be married.

SALLY
I disagree --

LARRY
That's what they say --

SALLY
Not me. I thought I did.

LARRY
I want to.

SALLY
How come you never got married?

LARRY
I don't know. I've come close. It just never happened.

SALLY
I want to live alone for awhile at least. I want to have a few experiences. Then if it happens, great, if not, that's just fine.

LARRY
Well, you're a very lovely woman. I'm sure you'll get what you want.

Puts his hand on her. Draws her close. They kiss. He keeps going, she stops.

SALLY
I can't go so quickly.

LARRY
I'm sorry.

SALLY
Metabolically it's not my rhythm.

LARRY
I understand.

SALLY
Thank you. I haven't been in a social situation that meant anything to me in a long time.

LARRY
I'm glad to hear you care.

SALLY
I wouldn't waste my time if I wasn't at least interested in exploring it.

He tries again. She goes with it, finally backs off.

SALLY (contd)
What's the rush?

LARRY
I apologize. I hope you realize I'm overanxious because I like you a lot.

SALLY
Believe me it's been a long time since I've made love. I told you, my marriage was dead for years. Why I can't say. It's the second law of thermodynamics -- sooner or later everything turns to shit ... that's my phrasing, not the Encyclopedia Brittanica.

LARRY
The strange thing is that often one doesn't even see it happening.

SALLY
I did. That's the part that kills me.

Her V.O. continues as WE CUT AWAY to illustrate her story. This past memory.

CUT TO: New York streets, a few years ago.

SALLY V.O.
I was in town working. Jack was supposed to be out of town on business. In Chicago. All of a sudden, by sheer accident --

She sees Jack ... Stunned, she follows.

He goes into a store that sells something like expensive women's jewelry.

CUT BACK TO: Her with Larry.

SALLY
I waited outside. My heart was pounding so loud you could hear it -- I wanted to go up to him but I couldn't ...

CUT TO: Him exiting.

SALLY V.O.
Soon he came out and hailed a cab.

CUT TO: Her and Jack at home the day it happened.

SALLY
(to Jack)
How was Chicago?

JACK
Busy. Lorenze refuses any settlement. The old man's tough.

CUT TO: Sally and Larry back in previous scene.

SALLY
I couldn't bring it up -- I was so hurt -- and so full of rage -- and scared ... for weeks I waited for him to say he met someone ... but he never did ... and even though I was always suspicious, I never found another incident -- I chose to overlook it ... and I hoped it would go away ... but it didn't ... because I began thinking about being rid of him ... and single ... and things just got worse between us ... and we put up bigger and bigger fronts. Now I'm free and I realize I'm one of those people who needs to be married.
(drinks after this contradictory remark)

LARRY
No more booze. I'm going home. And you're going to bed.
(last kiss)

CUT TO: Gabe on campus, flags down Rain. He is in car.

GABE
Can I give you a lift?

RAIN
I'm going home.

GABE
Me too. I'm downtown -- you're on Park Avenue, right? C'mon. I wanna talk to you about something.

CUT TO: Exterior driving shot.

CUT TO: Inside.

GABE
I brought in my novel for you to read.

RAIN
You did? How wonderful.

GABE
Don't forget, it's a first draft. I can already see for myself there's an awful lot of things wrong.

RAIN
Don't worry. I won't be too hard on you.

CUT TO: Them parked in front of her parents' house.

RAIN
C'mon up.

GABE
Me?

RAIN
Meet my folks -- they're terrific.

GABE
I've gotta get home.

RAIN
Just to say hello -- they're both big fans of yours. They were thrilled when I told them I was taking a class with you. Aren't you curious to see how I live?

A man in his forties comes up to them. Nicely dressed.

DICK
Is he why you never have any time anymore?

Gab taken aback -- she obviously knows the man.

RAIN
Richard, what are you doing here?

DICK
I wanted to see what he looked like.

GABE
This is a mistake.

RAIN
What I do is none of your affair ...

DICK
Believe me I got the message.

RAIN
You shouldn't follow me.

DICK
You're not what I thought you'd look like.

RAIN
Richard, this is not my boy friend ...

DICK
No?

RAIN
He's my professor at Columbia.

DICK
You always seduce all your female students?

GABE
Hey listen --

RAIN
Leave here at once -- What I do with my life is my business.

DICK
You led me on.

RAIN
I never led you on. I told you from the first day I didn't want to marry.

DICK
What does she tell you when you've got her in your arms?

GABE
Me? I never laid a finger -- I'm Professor Gabriel Roth --

RAIN
Please, Richard -- this is terrible. Go home. It wasn't meant to be.

DICK
(to Gabe)
I should really take you apart.

RAIN
Richard -- you're going through one of your phases. You need help. Go home. Please ... this is wrong.

Dick backs off and goes ... Gabe is shaken.

GABE
Boy, for a minute there it looked like we were going to be on page one of the Enquirer.

RAIN
I'm sorry ... I apologize for Richard. You want to come up?

GABE
I wouldn't mind a drink.

CUT TO: Them greeting by family -- ad-libs.

MOM
We're so happy to meet you. Rain has spoken of you so often.

DAD
Can we get you anything?

GABE
Just a mild sedative ...

CUT TO: Gabe and Rain off by themselves. He drinks, she explains.

RAIN
My father had a colleague ... We'd see him fairly often ...

CUT TO: The family and John the friend, maybe on boat or on golf course or tennis court.

RAIN V.O.
He was my father's business partner ... and one day he told me that he was in love with me ...

SHOT of John and Rain off talking.

RAIN V.O. (contd)
And I was very flattered ... he was nice looking and very bright ... and single ... and we started having an affair ... naturally we told no one ...

CUT BACK TO: Rain live, telling story.

RAIN
Ok, now I have a friend Jane and her parents are divorced -- and her father, Jerry, developed a terrific crush on --

Some SHOT depicting this at Jane's.

RAIN V.O.
And before long, I was seeing both these men -- and instead of being happy, I was miserable ... I couldn't get my feelings straight ... So I went to an analyst.

On this WE CUT TO: Shrink's office, it is Dick.

RAIN V.O. (contd)
And I tried for a few months to work things out ... and then one day he said that he was going to stop treating me because he felt it was not the thing to do since he was falling in love with me.

Another varied SHOT of her and Dick.

RAIN V.O. (contd)
And I was very taken with him ... you can imagine ... he's quite brilliant ... and I started seeing him ... and I did break from the other two ...

CUT BACK TO: Gabe and Rain live.

RAIN
But something inside me realized that he couldn't be a very stable
(MORE)

RAIN (contd)
person or a good analyst -- and I never really let things go too far with him ...

SHOT of Carl with Rain and young people.

RAIN V.O.
Then one night I met Carl. He was very sweet and really came on with me ... and I came to my senses and said to myself, what am I doing with all these older men? Carl is who I should be seeing ... not my friend's father or my father's partner ... and God knows, not my old analyst ... So I clean up my act ... and I've been dating Carl ... but as you can see, Richard is so unstable ... he took it badly ...

CUT TO: Them live. Gabe stunned by the story.

GABE
Well, I think you not only have material for your first novel but the sequel and an opera by Verdi.

RAIN
Don't you think I'm right? Carl is fun and what the hell am I doing with the mid-life crisis set? I mean they're all wonderful and rather accomplished men but in the end I felt I was like some kind of symbol of lost youth or unfulfilled dreams. Or am I too dramatic?

Her father enters ...

DAD
You're invited to Rain's birthday party in two weeks.

GABE
Oh yes? -- Well -- I'm -- I --

RAIN
He doesn't want to come to my party ...

MOM
Please -- we'd love to have you stop over for a drink -- you and your wife.

DAD
(confidentially
to Gabe)
I really do think you're a wonderful influence on Rain and inspiring, and I'd consider it an honor if you'd come by for a birthday drink.

They shake.

Over SHOT of Judy and Larry in office:

INT.
Just as Gabe gave his manuscript to Rain, Judy had also presented some of her writing.

LARRY
I finally got around to reading these lovely poems.

JUDY
You can be frank. It's just a hobby.

LARRY
They're full of feeling. I was very moved. What does your husband say?

JUDY
Oh I'd never show these to Gabe. He's intimidating -- his standards -- he'd be critical -- and he'd be right.

LARRY
You might be wrong. I bet he'd love them. I particularly enjoyed the ones about New England.

JUDY
There's a little cemetery on Martha's Vineyard that I'd like to be buried at.

LARRY
I know it -- and I've often said it's the place I'd choose too.

JUDY
Well, what an odd coincidence, we share the same taste in graveyards.
(laugh)

LARRY
Want to eat lunch outside today?
(MORE)

LARRY (contd)
It's so nice. Just get some sandwiches and sit in the park?

JUDY
Love to.

SHOT of them buying take-out.

Sitting by park or river, depending on where they work. It starts to rain. They run back to office.

Pick them up inside office, wet.

LARRY
(out of breath, drying)
It's ironic, isn't it? You wrote a poem about two people caught in the rain -- and now we live it out.

JUDY
Did you get soaked?

LARRY
Not so bad. You?

JUDY
A little.

LARRY
It was fun.

JUDY
I'm a mess.

LARRY
Can I speak frankly with you?

JUDY
Yes -- of course.

LARRY
Thank you for introducing me to Sally.

JUDY
Yes?

LARRY
I think I'm in love with her.

JUDY
Well -- that was quick.

LARRY
Not that she shares my feelings. Or if she ever will.

JUDY
She's not single that long ...

LARRY
No -- I realize ... it's like I found someone I care about and I'm waiting for the other shoe to fall.

JUDY
Well, you're gun shy from some bad luck.

LARRY
Is she as terrific as she seems?

JUDY
She's wonderful -- and she's honest and decent -- and I can't say enough good things about her.

LARRY
That goes a long way with me -- because you know how much respect I have for your word.

JUDY
I'm feeling a little weak -- maybe it was the run down the block.

LARRY
Here -- sit ... I'll get you some water.

CUT TO: Judy, int.

JUDY
I felt anxious and totally bewildered. Why did I introduce Sally to Larry and push it -- when I, myself, had feelings for him -- and yet I was married -- how dare I develop a crush on another man. I would never have had an affair -- out of the question. What did I want? I don't know -- I do know I was very jealous of Sally. Suddenly it seemed like she was doing with her life what I wanted to do.

CUT TO: A party -- much hullaballoo -- music. WE SEE Jack drinking -- Sam with other group.

KEN
You look good. You don't get any older. You have to work out.

JACK
Since Sally and I broke up I'm single -- I have to keep up my physical appearance.

KEN
I saw Sally the other night. She's dating some guy. She introduced us. Seemed nice... -- nice looking ... Claire can tell you.

CLAIRE
I think she said he's an editor.

JACK
Uh-huh. Are they seeing one another?

CLAIRE
I don't know.

KEN
I'm drunk so don't hold me responsible but you gave up a great one when you gave up Sally.

CLAIRE
(admonishing)
Ken -- he's feeling silly.

JACK
Listen -- I know -- we were married for a lot of years. She's a great lady.

KEN
I mean not to worry -- she'll be all right -- this guy -- Larry -- Larry something -- seemed fine.

CLAIRE
Let's go home, Ken.

KEN
What? Don't tell me I'm outa line?
(MORE)

KEN (contd)
You're ok, aren't you? That blonde girl -- Samantha -- Sam -- She should be in the Olympics.

JACK
So Sally said she's serious about this guy?

CLAIRE
No -- we just said hello and chatted for a minute.

KEN
She looked great. Has she had face work?

CLAIRE
Let's go, Ken.

JACK
I'm going to leave soon too. Where is Sam?

He goes looking through noise and crowd and finds her in discussion with small group.

JOE
(good natured)
How can you possibly take that position? It's so absurd.

SAM
It's totally provable.

MAY
Provable? How? From gypsies?

SAM
It's so logical. Why wouldn't the position of the planets have an influence on your personality.

MEL
It's too foolish to refute.

SAM
They know there's more crime during a full moon.

JOE
But that's not proof for astrology.

SAM
We're all typed by planets when we're born. You should have your chart done.

Laughter.

MEL
My chart was done by Columbia Presbyterian -- they said I had high blood pressure.

Laughter.

MAY
(sweetly)
Be logical, Samantha.

SAM
I am logical. I wouldn't mix a Sagittarius with a Libra.

JACK
(entering to rescue)
We have to be going.

SAM
It's early.

JACK
(hustling her off)
We do. Nice seeing you. C'mon, Sam.

SAM
I just want to make a point.

JACK
Some other time.
(hustles her off)
Look, if you don't know what you're talking about, don't say anything.

SAM
They don't know what they're talking about.

JACK
Don't feel obligated to make conversation. You can just listen once in awhile.

SAM
I listen.

JACK
You give me that bullshit on astrology too -- it's so fuckin' stupid and I told you.

SAM
There's nothing stupid about it.

JACK
All day and all night I have to listen to your shit about Zen foods and soy beans and the fuckin' zodiac. It's too stupid to comment on.

SAM
Take your hands off me.

JACK
Get in the car.

SAM
Who do you think you're talking to?

JACK
Embarrass me in front of my friends. What do you think they are? Fuckin' infantile teeny-boppers? They're trying to have an intelligent conversation and you're jerkin' off with astrology and fuckin' crystals.

SAM
Your friends are no great intellectuals, believe me. Leave me alone. I'm not going.

JACK
Yes you are.

SAM
Help! Help!

JACK
Will you shut up! Are you crazy?

SAM
I <u>want</u> to embarrass you.

JACK
Are you coming with me?

SAM
No. I hate you and these pompous, stuck-up, assholes. Assholes!!

JACK
You're fuckin' crazy!

SAM
You're too drunk to drive!

He pulls out, crashes into something, people are watching. She gets out of car, he gets out, grabs her, forces her in.

JACK
Get in the fuckin' car.

He lurches off -- goes a few feet, stops, lurches off -- bangs into tree.

CUT TO: Sneeden's Landing house. Sally and Larry. Night.

They are making love in bed. Play this a bit. Both responding well.

CUT TO: Sally, int.

INT.
Why were you able to have an orgasm with Larry and not with your husband?

SALLY
I didn't. I was trying to -- trying very hard to go with it -- but I was tense -- I came close.

INT.
Why do you think it's so hard for you?

SALLY
My mind just gets racing with thoughts. You'd laugh if I told you. I get so mentally hyperactive.

INT.
Like what?

CUT TO: Her in bed. Larry slides down, his head between her legs. We play her face.

SALLY V.O.
I thought that I like what Larry was doing to me and it felt different than Jack -- more gentle -- and more
(MORE)

SALLY V.O. (contd)
exciting -- and I thought how different Larry was from Jack and how much deeper his vision of life was -- and I thought Larry was a hedgehog and Jack was a fox -- and then I thought Judy was a fox and Gabe was a hedgehog -- and I thought about all the people I knew and which were hedgehogs and which were foxes -- Al Simon, a friend was a hedgehog and his wife Jenny was a hedgehog and Cindy Salkind was a fox and Lou Patrino was a hedgehog --

CUT TO: Sex partners, post-coital.

LARRY
I had the feeling there were times that you weren't into it.

SALLY
Oh no -- I mean I told you the problems I've had with Jack but -- no -- it was wonderful.

LARRY
But you were pretending a little, weren't you?

SALLY
What a thing to say.

LARRY
It's only because I want to tell you you don't have to. It was a great experience for me. What's the matter? Did I hurt your feelings?

SALLY
I don't want you to get the wrong impression. I loved it.

LARRY
Me too.

SALLY
I know it's why my husband got tired of me and started sleeping around.

LARRY
Uh-huh.

SALLY
I used to get real excited when we were first married but somewhere along the line it slipped away.

LARRY
It's ok.

SALLY
What? That I'm not responsive?

LARRY
You will be.

SALLY
I wonder.

LARRY
Don't get into a snit. We had a nice experience.

SALLY
Yes, but we had two separate nice experiences.

LARRY
Ok, but they were nice.

SALLY
But they were separate.

LARRY
I'm starting to see why your husband got crazy.

SALLY
Very funny.

LARRY
Are you hungry?

SALLY
He said, trying to change the subject.

LARRY
Oh come on -- What was that?

They perk up at sounds downstairs.

SALLY
There's been a series of burglaries ...

LARRY
You have an alarm?

SALLY
No ...

LARRY
Dial the police ... I better check it out ...

SALLY
No ...

LARRY
Call the cops -- I'm going to look.

In some form they do and in some reveal, say the lights go on, WE SEE Jack, drunk, has broken in.

JACK
Who are you?

LARRY
Who are you?

SALLY
Jack, my God!

JACK
You changed the fuckin' lock on my own home?

SALLY
What are you doing here?

JACK
Who the hell is this?

SALLY
(introducing)
My husband -- It's none of your business -- please leave --

JACK
I don't want to leave.

LARRY
Look, are you ok?

JACK
Who are you? Is he living here?

LARRY
Don't get upset.

JACK
Is he fucking you in our bed?

LARRY
Ok, let's not make this ugly ...

SALLY
Go upstairs. Let me talk to him.

JACK
Where's he going? To our bed?

SALLY
It's not our bed anymore, Jack. Please, you need some black coffee. I'll make it and then go.

JACK
I want to come back.

SALLY
Jack, you're drunk.

JACK
My life is all messed up.

SALLY
This is not the time and place to discuss anything.

JACK
It's my house. It's my fuckin' house! --

SALLY
No more.

JACK
I want to start over.

SALLY
It's not possible. Too much has happened.

JACK
I made so many mistakes.

SALLY
You're feeling blue. You could never hold liquor.

JACK
Everything wasn't my fault. We both fucked up.

SALLY
I never said it was.

JACK
You're so hard to live with -- get off my back -- lemme breathe!

SALLY
You've told me this before.

JACK
Everything I say you got an answer for. I don't want to argue.

SALLY
What do you want me to say -- our marriage was full of problems -- some were my fault -- some were yours -- you've lied to me -- you deceived me -- you cheated -- we stopped loving each other.

JACK
All right -- shut up -- There's a stranger in the house.

SALLY
He knows.

JACK
Everybody's got problems. No one has it easy.

SALLY
What happened to the one you moved in with.

JACK
That's bullshit.

SALLY
Well, I've met someone I like.

JACK
We had so many years together.

SALLY
You had no problem wiping them out when it suited you.

JACK
I didn't know what to do.

SALLY
I can't discuss this now. It's over. Go home. You'll feel better tomorrow.

JACK
I'll feel awful tomorrow.

Bell rings.

SALLY
Oh shit -- the neighbors probably called the police.

Answers it, it's Sam.

SAM
(entering, confronting Jack)
Are you gonna leave me sitting in the car all night?

SALLY
Oh brother.

JACK
I told you I'd just be a few minutes.

SAM
It's been fifteen minutes now.

CUT TO: Larry in bedroom, on phone.

LARRY
(on phone)
This is Larry Gates, do I have any messages?

CUT TO: Downstairs.

SALLY
If you two had a fight why don't you go home and sleep it off.

SAM
(to Jack)
You were rude and vulgar to me in front of strangers. I was never spoken to like that -- not by anybody.

JACK
If you don't behave like an imbecile no one'll treat you like one!

SAM
Who are you to judge?

JACK
Sally -- please -- can't you see what I've done to my life?

SALLY
Then go see a psychiatrist.

SAM
I'm the one who needs a shrink.

JACK
(notices Larry watching)
You can come out -- this is about all of us! We have no secrets here.

SALLY
That's bullshit. We have nothing but secrets.

SAM
I never knew a Scorpio who wasn't secretive.

JACK
Will you shut up with that shit!

SALLY
I'm going to sleep. Get out! Both of you! --

JACK
I made some mistakes. I behaved wrong. I blew it. Why is it irreversible?

LARRY
Look -- can I help? Should I get lost?

SALLY
Go home. It's over. It's over. Go home.

CUT TO: Jack and Sam in car heading into night, wrecked.

CUT TO: Rain at home reading Gabe's novel.

In this sequence, we hear excerpts from the book read over certain types of random footage. Now and then Rain reading but other, more kinetic footage.

GABE'S VOICE
The heart raged and demanded, grew melancholy and confused and toward what end? To articulate what nitwit strategy? Procreation? To proliferate fiendishly like billions of those wild flowers in country fields?

When he stopped for a second to play the game of imagining the odds against his being born it made him feel faint. On this tiny planet in the universe amongst millions of sperms belonging to his father Abe -- that the one bearing his existence should win the battle over all the others in the contest for Yetta's particular egg.

It told him something, this business of how mind boggling numbers of sperm competed for a single egg -- it was not the other way around. Countless eggs seductively suing for the approval of the lone lucky wiggling sperm.

No -- nature's way was different. No wonder he would make love at any time and place with any number of women, including total strangers while she was more selective. She was catering to the demands of one small egg about which reason could be imagined while he had millions of desperate sperms screaming frantically, let us out! Please! Let us out, now!

Above could have sperm footage.

GABE'S VOICE (contd)
Everybody had such specific needs -- and so many were so irrational. Rifkin fell for women who were helpless and like little girls. Bernstein could not achieve an erection unless the woman dressed like Heinrich Himmler. Rose Goodman led a middle class life but yearned for a black man.

It was like those desperate ads in
(MORE)

GABE'S VOICE (contd)
the personals column with a dozen requirements and if they were not enough there was added, must be non-smoker.

In the end a good marriage was luck.

What did it really mean to say the heart is irrational? Is anything really irrational? Even a schizophrenic who hears voices from the top of the Empire State Building telling him to kill someone, commits the murder because he believes he's carrying out a rational action given his preceptual error. What are we responsible for? Depends how you viewed it. Everything and nothing.

Feldman longed to meet a woman who attracted him physically and had the following personality: A quick sense of humor equal to his, a love of sports equal to his, a love of classical music equal to his with a particular fondness for Bach and balmy climates. In short, he wanted himself but as a pretty woman.

In the dream Rabbinowitz had a change of sex operation. Now he was no longer Rabbinowitz but Priscilla Rabbinowitz. He no longer found anything about black garter belts and whips erotic -- he wanted a decent male that he could share things with and who would be tender and faithful.

Pepkin married and raised a family. He led a warm, domestic life, placid but dull. Knapp was a swinger. He eschewed nuptial ties and fucked five different women a week. Students, housewives, nurses, actresses, a doctor, a sales girl, you name it, it held Knapp between its legs. Pepkin from the calm of his fidelity envied Knapp. Knapp, lonely beyond belief, envied Pepkin.

SHOT of two parents, older, a la Gabe's.

FATHER
Divorce was not an option. Your mother and me wouldn't think in those days ... you stuck it out. Believe me, many's the time I wanted to break her neck.

MOTHER
Believe me, the feeling was mutual.

FATHER
But we gritted our teeth and kept going. Not like today with the adultery and the divorces left and right.

MOTHER
We stayed together for the children. Then we fought and screamed in front of them so much they all wound up with psychiatrists.

Over more random footage, maybe even the described nude scene:

GABE'S VOICE
Jenny was proud of her body. Rightly so. But when they lived together she was always naked --

Reading papers on floor.

GABE'S VOICE (contd)
Gradually he became immune to the power of her nudity. There were no surprises and when his mousy accountant's dress crept up ennabling him to see the top of her stocking, he lusted for her and her only.

One never saw what the hero and heroine lived like after the passion and excitement of their initial adventure was over and they settled down to the day to day business of domesticity. Was marriage finally a deal? A contract where each person agreed to remain faithful despite inevitable longings and daydreams to the contrary? After

(MORE)

GABE'S VOICE (contd)
all, the daily routine for anyone was just that -- pretty routine when you examined it. Did desire really grow with the years or did familiarity cause partners to long for other lovers? Was it only the demands of routine, the habits of life, the fear of loneliness that held couples together as their lives drained away in colorless composure? Was the notion of ever deepening romance a myth we had grown up on along with simultaneous orgasm? The only time Rifkin and his wife experienced a simultaneous orgasm was when the judge handed them their divorce. Was the answer not to expect too much from life?

He had learned that if one took care of one's styptic pencil and dried it after each using it lasted longer than most relationships.

CUT TO: Rain concluding the book.

CUT TO: Meeting between Rain and Gabe.

RAIN
It's a wonderful book. It's entertaining and moving and imaginative.

GABE
You can be honest with me.

RAIN
I am. It's just -- full of suffering but made so funny. All these little lost souls running around --

GABE
Gee I'm encouraged by your enthusiasm. I really have gone through some bad moments with this.

RAIN
Has anyone else read it?

GABE
Yes -- well -- gee -- I feel almost euphoric that you like it but of course you're a sucker for my stuff.

RAIN
No -- I'm objective. I mean yes, I'm crazy about your view of things. I mean I had some criticism but the thing is wonderful.

GABE
No, I'm sure you had criticism -- but you make me feel positive. What er -- what criticism?

RAIN
Nothing serious -- it was great -- it was a delight.

GABE
You're like a breath of fresh air -- the student stimulating the teacher.

RAIN
I'm sure it's because it confirms what you think of your book -- there's a reason you never totally gave up on it -- and that it kept resurfacing in your life.

GABE
I've had such a love-hate relationship with it and even though I threatened to destroy it, I didn't.

RAIN
You have to finish it. You must. And thank you for the privilege of letting me read it.
(turns to return it to him)

GABE
Thank you -- you're like a tonic. I've been up and back on it for four years --

RAIN
Is that how long?

GABE
On and off.

RAIN
Uh-oh ...

GABE
What?

RAIN
I left it in the taxi.

GABE
What?

RAIN
I'm going to cry.

GABE
Rain -- it's the only copy --

RAIN
I know, I know ...

GABE
What taxi?

RAIN
I think the taxi -- or did I? No -- or was it?

GABE
What? What?

RAIN
Oh God -- what'd I do!?

GABE
Think -- relax -- keep calm ...

RAIN
His name -- his name --

GABE
I think I'm going to have an epileptic fit ...

RAIN
Oh God -- oh my God ...

GABE
Stop crying -- it's ok -- we'll get it -- take it easy.

RAIN
(falling apart)
Oh please --

GABE
It's ok -- really ...

RAIN
He was Indian ...

GABE
The driver?

RAIN
Or Armenian --

GABE
Did he wear a turban?

RAIN
I didn't notice.

GABE
Well, you'd have noticed a turban.

RAIN
Hargopian? Is that possible?

GABE
Mister Hargopian or Swami Hargopian?
Stop crying! It's ok -- it's ok ...
it's only a ... a ...

CUT TO: Them on phone booth -- Ad-lib about locating a cabbie named Hargopian.

CUT TO: Them coming down to cab company -- futile business there.

Finally driver Hargopian comes. No manila envelope in his cab.

They are despondent.

GABE
Please don't be upset.

RAIN
I just want to die.

GABE
Please. It's nothing. What is it?
I remember the general outline.

RAIN
I don't think I can ever see you
again ...

GABE
Why not? Don't be silly!

RAIN
The humiliation -- the hurt I've
caused you.

GABE
It's not the end of the world -- really -- come on ...

CUT TO: Gabe, int.

GABE
I was so crushed -- I wanted to die -- to just cut my throat.

INT.
But you put up a false front for her ...

GABE
What am I going to do? She was wrecked. The poor girl.

INT.
So this book was very, very meaningful to you, despite all your carrying on about how you hated it.

GABE
I guess so.

INT.
And the young woman? Rain?

GABE
Her approbation just hit a nerve with me. It meant something to me.

INT.
Why was her praise and encouragement for your work so pleasing -- Judy, your own wife had liked it very much and you gave her a hard time.

GABE
I don't know. I sensed in Rain a connection. She somehow got my adrenaline going.

CUT TO: Them still at hack place or garage.

MAN
(on phone)
Yeah -- right here -- hold on a minute. Someone found your envelope.

GABE
(grabbing phone)
Stay there, we'll come right over ...
(hangs up)
(MORE)

GABE (contd)
We got it! We found it!
(hugs her)

RAIN
Let's go!

CUT TO: Them in cab.

GABE
Oh I'm so relieved. I'm vibrating.

RAIN
It's so Freudian.

GABE
What is?

RAIN
I guess I didn't want you to finish the book after all.

GABE
Don't be crazy -- you left it in a cab ...

RAIN
But why? It's obviously so significant.

GABE
What possible significance?

RAIN
I don't know ... maybe I felt threatened.

GABE
Why threatened? By my book?

RAIN
I'm very competitive by nature.

GABE
Not with me.

RAIN
Um, I don't know ...

GABE
That's absurd.

RAIN
Why? Because I'm a young female?

GABE
No -- it's just that I'm in your corner and we're not in competition.

RAIN
Richard always said I have an unconscious comprehension of myself as phallic.

GABE
Never date an analyst -- especially your own. The main thing is we found it.

RAIN
I wonder if I felt threatened by certain things in the book.

GABE
Like what?

RAIN
Some of your attitudes toward women -- ideas about life.

GABE
I thought you said you loved the book.

RAIN
I did.

GABE
What were your criticisms?

RAIN
Nothing.

GABE
No, tell me.

RAIN
Behind all the wit and imagination there's a certain cynicism.

GABE
No -- why is reality always mistaken for cynicism? I don't think everybody's on the take.

RAIN
Maybe even narcissism.

GABE
Narcissism? Jesus -- It's incredible how fashionable alienation has been replaced by fashionable accusations of narcissism.

RAIN
The way the lead character sees women is -- retrograde -- shallow.

GABE
First you said it was a great book ...

RAIN
It is -- it's wonderful -- and I never said great -- it's alive and brilliant -- I'm arguing ideas. Triumph of the Will was a great movie but you despise the ideas behind it.

GABE
You despise my ideas?

RAIN
No -- maybe the Nazi example is too strong, although the principle's the same. There's a reason I deliberately lost the book.

GABE
Maybe it was just irresponsibility.

RAIN
I'm not usually a careless person. Maybe I wanted the manuscript gone because I was a little disappointed in your attitudes. The casual way your people have affairs.

GABE
That's comic exaggeration -- I don't condone affairs. I'm just exploring the difficulties of relationships -- of marriage.

RAIN
Do you really think the choices are between suburban drudgery and chronic dissatisfaction?

GABE
I'm just raising the issue to explore.
(MORE)

GABE (contd)
These ideas cause pain for people and of course I'm deliberately making it comic.

RAIN
You have to be careful not to trivialize.

GABE
I hope I haven't.

RAIN
Isn't it beneath you as a mature thinker to allow your lead character to waste so much emotional energy obsessing over a practically psychotic romance with a woman you fantasize as inspired and powerfully sexual when in fact she was pitifully sick?

GABE
You sound almost jealous.

RAIN
Of schizophrenia?

GABE
Let me stop you. I don't need a lecture on writing or maturity from a twenty year old twit. You asked to read my novel, I was nice about it, you tell me you love it --

RAIN
I do.

GABE
Then you leave the fucking thing in a taxi -- and you weep and I'm consoling you -- now you turn on me.

RAIN
Well, I really must have hit a nerve.

GABE
A bullshit nerve. Your poor boy friend. He's going to have his hands full -- believe me, I know.

RAIN
I'm worth it.

They ride on in cold silence.

CUT TO: The home of the Banduccis, nice family, lower class Italian.

GABE
Please let me give you something.

RICO
No, no, no ...
(calming kids)
My son -- gets married today ...

GABE
How sweet.

RICO
Two nice kids. What do you spill on Mr. Roth!?

Kids have spilled pasta sauce or the like on him.

GABE
Can I give the bride and groom some present?

RICO
No, no, no ... please -- I found your envelope.

RAIN
Here --

She gives her pin to the daughter.

GIRL
Thank you.

GABE
Jesus -- I'm a little wet ...

RICO
(to Rain)
I'm sorry -- he made your father all wet.

All in all a warm experience. At a moment of sentimental music accenting bride and groom, Rain mouths to Gabe, "I'm sorry."

Gabe touches her cheek or whatever.

CUT TO: Gabe, int.

GABE
Yes, I admit it. Her outburst in the cab attracted me to her in some way ... but a very clear warning bell went off. No question Rain was enticing but she was trouble. I'd been through the mill too many times. I was not about to be some middle aged guy who throws his life away for some high strung student -- my common sense told me -- where could it lead? At my age I want a sweet help meet -- someone not so nuts -- I'm not a kid anymore.

CUT TO: Restaurant, ext. Night.

INT. V.O.
Less than two weeks later, Jack and Sally got back together. This turn of events was celebrated over dinner with Judy and Gabe.

JACK
Y'can't wipe out years of closeness just like that. You think you can. You don't see the roots but they're down there.

SALLY
Some people are just not constituted to be single.

JACK
Look, we all make mistakes. Nobody's perfect. It's how one chooses to interpret those mistakes.

SALLY
I think the true test of a relationship is how you can weather a crisis.

JACK
Sure, it's easy when everything's flowing smoothly.

JUDY
It's great -- if you can be that mature.

JACK
It became a question of priorities.

SALLY
(drinks, teases him)
How long can you discuss physical fitness and the zodiac?

JACK
Listen, that Larry character was no bargain.

SALLY
How was Larry?

JUDY
He called in sick. I called him but he sounded miserable -- but he did have a cold.

SALLY
Larry's very sweet -- and I guess I really pulled the rug out from under him. Although his real crush is on Judy, not to offend you, Gabe.

GABE
Hey, I'm flattered when other men look at my wife.

JUDY
Gabe needs confirmation of his own feelings -- especially when it comes to me.

GABE
Hey -- what a thing to say.

SALLY
No -- I'd watch it if I were you, Gabe, he always talks about Judy in hushed tones. Apparently those poems you wrote impressed him.

JACK
To a good marriage. Still the best two people can hope for.

CUT TO: Gabe and Judy at home that night.

GABE
I didn't know you were fooling around with poetry.

JUDY
Well, you never seem to be interested.

GABE
Well, how can I be interested if you never tell me about it?

JUDY
I'd be embarrassed to show you anything.

GABE
But why?

JUDY
Because you're so hard on everything.

GABE
I am not.

JUDY
Of course you are. You're so judgemental.

GABE
I'm not down on Shakespeare or Byron or T.S. Eliot.

JUDY
Well, my stuff is not that good yet.

GABE
I would have given you an objective evaluation.

JUDY
I didn't want an objective evaluation. I wanted them read by someone a little more generous.

GABE
This character in your office?

JUDY
He's not a character.

GABE
Are you in love with him?

JUDY
No. Because I asked him to read my poems?

GABE
I didn't even know you wrote poems.

JUDY
There's a lot you don't know about me.

GABE
Like what?

JUDY
You know facts but not feelings.

GABE
I can't help it if you choose to keep feelings hidden.

JUDY
Look, we're tired -- why do we always pick this time --

GABE
You shouldn't let my sarcasm put you off. I'm interested in your feelings. I love you.

JUDY
Who even knows what it means to love anybody anymore.

GABE
I mean it, Judy. Jack and Sally are right. They learned something the hard way.

JUDY
<u>If</u> they've really learned. You get the impression they're trying to convince themselves as much as us.

GABE
Now who's being overcritical? If you write poems I want you to show them to me, not some outsider.

JUMP CUT TO: Later.

GABE
I sometimes think we'd be happier if we moved. I often wonder what it would be like if I taught at some small college in Vermont or New Hampshire -- you like the rural life.

JUDY
You saw Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf? -- Besides, I lived in Pennsylvania with David -- we tried to get away from the rat race but the rat race is not out there -- it's in here.
(tapping chest)

CUT TO: Later.

JUDY
I saw Dr. Ritchey today.

GABE
Where?

JUDY
I started psychotherapy again.

GABE
You did? Why?

JUDY
I don't know. I've had confused feelings lately.

GABE
Like what? Jesus, anything else you want to tell me?

JUDY
Like ever since Sally and Jack broke up I had feelings of wanting to be free.

GABE
Really ...

JUDY
I know it's crazy. For some reason when they broke up it triggered something in me ... it made me re-examine our marriage -- and of course recently having a birthday.

GABE
You had a -- ugh --

CUT TO: Later.

GABE
Our generation's trouble is that we grew up when the dominant modes
(MORE)

GABE (contd)
of social interaction were learned from movies. Not only are we the emotional product of unrealistic film scenarios but bad ones. And yet, one never gives up hope that around that corner is Vivien Leigh or Fred Astaire.

JUDY
Telling you'd pick Vivien Leigh.

GABE
My favorite.

JUDY
Because she was Scarlett O'Hara who was a bitch and that's always attracted you in women. Was your mother mean?

GABE
My mother was a little Jewish woman who used to dip her hand in the pickle barrel and sell pickles.

CUT TO: Later.

JUDY
Don't tell me you don't flirt because I've seen you flirt at parties. You put on a different personality.

GABE
No.

JUDY
Yes -- you get soulful and pretend to want things that you really can't stand.

GABE
Like what?

JUDY
Like living in Europe. It's a flirting tactic. You couldn't survive off the isle of Manhattan for forty-eight hours.

GABE
When I met you, you didn't represent yourself so honestly.

JUDY
Like what?

GABE
Like you were glad your daughter was grown and you didn't want any more kids.

JUDY
People change. I'm not the person I was five years ago.

GABE
Well, that's one reason relationships go sour.

JUDY
You hate change.

GABE
Of course I hate change. Change equals death.

JUDY
Oh don't give me that bullshit that sounds like an insight or an epigram. You can fool your twenty year old students with that but it says nothing. Change is what life is made of. You have to be flexible or you get cut down.

CUT TO: Later.

JUDY
You have such high hopes at the beginning.

GABE
My God, what is it reasonable to expect out of life? Someone you care about who you can share things with.

JUDY
We shared some things.

GABE
I think we shared some terrific things.

JUDY
We did -- we walked on beaches and made love for whole weekends.

GABE
Nobody can sustain the level of excitement when you first meet.

JUDY
And we had some great trips ... Venice -- and the Fjords ...

GABE
Um ...

JUDY
And the time you threw up into the Grand Canyon.

GABE
Well, I have agoraphobia ... I panicked all over that space.

JUDY
Another great time we had was in California at the race track ... When we won the daily double ...

GABE
I remember -- six thousand bucks ... what a windfall ...

JUDY
I was finally able to gorge myself on caviar guilt free.

GABE
My best memories are much smaller things -- like when neither of us could sleep and we found Wild Strawberries on TV at three in the morning and stayed up all night watching it ... or when we were all dressed formally in gown and tuxedo heading for the faculty dinner party and we both said, let's not go and we made a right turn and entered Central Park and it was snowing ... you looked so great in that black dress.

Pause -- he fondles her.

JUDY
Don't.

GABE
Why not?

JUDY
Because it's over and we both know it.

GABE
We do?

JUDY
Yes ... those memories are just that ... memories ... They're from years gone by ... they're isolated moments that don't tell the whole story ...

GABE
Are you in love with the guy in your office?

JUDY
It's not him specifically. I think it might be a good idea to be away from one another for awhile. I'm not suggesting a divorce -- just a chance to get some perspective.

GABE
Ok -- if that's really want you want.

JUDY
What do you want?

GABE
I don't know.

JUDY
I don't either.

CUT TO: SHOT of hotel.

INT. V.O.
Several days later Gabe moved out of his apartment and into the Gramercy Park Hotel.

CUT TO: Judy, int.

JUDY
No, I was not being completely honest with Gabe because I didn't want to hurt him. I knew what I wanted. I was in love with Larry Gates and now that he was available I wanted to be free to pursue it and not have to lie or cheat or sneak around.

CIT TO: Gabe, int.

GABE
How could I have been one hundred percent honest with Judy? I loved her ... I cared about her and so what am I going to do? Tell her the harsh truth? That I'm completely infatuated by some twenty year old -- who I know is trouble -- that I've learned nothing -- I'm sleep-walking into a mess.

INT.
Then why didn't you stop yourself?

GABE
Because I was too excited over the prospect of Rain. Because years of marriage hadn't given me a feeling I craved.

INT.
Rain had a boy friend.

GABE
I know -- I know all the reason why it was absurd ... she's young, her track record's not great -- I could see her personality was unpredictable ...

INT.
So what is it? You have a self-destructive streak?

GABE
What can I say? My heart didn't want to hear about logic. I felt apprehension and depression over my marriage coming apart but I'd be lying if I said I didn't suddenly get a buzz out of the freedom.

CUT TO: Sally and Jack at home. Some normal business -- phone rings, she picks it up.

SALLY
(into phone)
Hello.
(takes it privately)
Larry, please -- we've been through it all. It's a decision I felt I
(MORE)

SALLY (contd)
should make -- no -- I wanted to. I'm sorry. I said I was sorry many times now. I can't keep discussing it. No -- I don't want to have a drink ... I have to go. Well, you make it hard ... I have to go.

CUT TO: Larry hanging up at office, sits dejectedly.

CUT TO: Judy cutting something from magazine -- bringing it in to him after checking her appearance in mirror.

JUDY
You won't believe this one. She claims she was taken aboard a space ship that landed in New Jersey and gang raped by aliens ... they have space penises that ejaculated laser beams -- what's the matter?

LARRY
I can't believe she went back to him.

JUDY
Still that ...

LARRY
It was so sudden. I feel empty. I thought I had finally met that person who pressed all the right buttons. Remember how taken I was right off --

JUDY
Well, they were married for years.

LARRY
You should have heard her talk about him. He deceived her, they were finished ... She felt rage -- no sex --

JUDY
You can never tell in a relationship -- take me and Gabe ...

LARRY
Usually I'm so slow in forming
(MORE)

LARRY (contd)
attachments -- and yet with Sally something clicked into place so strongly for me.

JUDY
Now that Gabe and I have split -- sure I can think about him and our marriage and I have moments of loneliness and maybe doubt but I know it was right ...

LARRY
But how could I have guessed so wrong?

JUDY
It's hard to know. When Gabe and I broke up -- it's been weeks -- it takes getting used to. But if you want to change your life -- y'know it's one-fifteen -- you want to have lunch?

LARRY
(dialing)
And all her explanations are unconvincing. Like he's sold her a bill of goods but you can hear it in her voice. She's not sure.

JUDY
I think she is sure, Larry.

LARRY
Hello? It's me again -- don't hang up -- Sally, we're not twenty years old.

CUT TO: Rain's birthday shindig at Park Avenue apt. Music, guests.

Gabe gives her a leather bound book as gift.

RAIN
Thank you ...

MOM
We're so glad you could make it. Is your wife here?

GABE
I'm sorry to say I'm no longer living with my wife.

MOM
Oh you writers.

CUT TO: Group at piano.

CUT TO: Rain and Carl and someone and Gabe. Lightning out window.

CARL
Did you see that?

GABE
It's beautiful from up here.

RAIN
I love storms.

CARL
The television said we're going to get the tail end of that hurricane off Carolina.

ED
It's starting to come down already.

RAIN
It's very fitting. I was born during a hurricane.

CUT TO: Mom and Dad. They see Rain.

DAD
She looks so beautiful, doesn't she?

MOM
Twenty-one ... it's incredible ... our little Rainer.

DAD
I can't believe I'll be fifty-five in December.

MOM
We have a twenty-fifth wedding anniversary coming up in June.

DAD
It's been a great quarter century.

CUT TO: Them both being interviewed.

DAD
We'd both been married before.

MOM
I was a horror to my first husband ... so selfish and unfeeling. He was a decent man but he could do no right in my eyes.

INT.
Why'd you marry him?

MOM
It looked good ... we were young ... both history majors ... both liked the idea of moving to New York ... both liked the theatre ... both spoke French ...

DAD
My first marriage was bad too ... like Karin's it started well but we just grew apart ... and then I met Karin.

MOM
It was strange because we both were so gun shy ... having such bad marriages ... and suspicious ... and cautious ...

DAD
We were two highly strung animals ... because of <u>our</u> backgrounds.

MOM
Both our parents were difficult ...

DAD
But I guess our loneliness was greater than our fear -- so we took a chance and started seeing each other and let ourselves go -- trusting it ...

MOM
And it worked from day one.

DAD
We just got along ... we complemented one another ... we had fun ... we fulfilled each other's needs ...

MOM
Not that we didn't sometimes disagree.

DAD
Oh sure ... we had some beauty fights ... but mostly we had wonderful times ... we enjoyed one another's company ...

MOM
Nothing he said rubbed me wrong like my first husband ... even the same ideas expressed by him were charming ... from my first husband -- annoying ...

DAD
And of course we were blessed with this wonderful daughter.

MOM
Who we adored and spoiled rotten.

DAD
No she's a handful -- but I predict great things.

CUT BACK TO: Party. The lights have blown.

Confusion -- candles being lit.

Ad-libs of:
Ok, don't panic ... it's a short circuit in the building -- from the storm ...
The lights'll be on in a few minutes ...
Be careful with the candles ...
The food'll spoil ...
Not in a few minutes ...

Lightning illuminates once or twice ...

Gabe finds Rain.

RAIN
My luck at my birthday party ...

GABE
It's sort of pretty.

RAIN
Have you seen the lightning flashes? And the wind is supposed to get worse ... I don't know how everybody's going to get home.

GABE
You look so pretty by candlelight.
(MORE)

GABE (contd)
I never got a chance to wish you a happy birthday.

RAIN
Yes you did, when you gave me that book.

GABE
Can I give you your real present?
(gives her a small box)

RAIN
Another?

GABE
I didn't want to give this to you with everyone around because I didn't want it to be misconstrued ... it's a little on the romantic side but I thought you'd like it.

She opens it, finds a tiny lovely music box.

RAIN
It's lovely. Why would it be misconstrued?

GABE
Because I knew you'd like it and I know you're a young girl with a boy friend and I'm your teacher and it'd look funny giving you a very romantic music box.

RAIN
So you gave me the book ...

GABE
Right ...

RAIN
Why did you pick <u>Tender Is The Night</u>?

GABE
You really want to know? Because the first great love of my life identified with the heroine.

RAIN
Uh-huh. So I wound up with two presents.

GABE
Lucky.

RAIN
But no birthday kiss?

GABE
Oh sorry.
(a peck for her)

RAIN
That's it?

GABE
What do you want me to do? Bend you back and put my tongue down your throat to your shoetops?

RAIN
I am twenty-one.

GABE
And you are correctly with a twenty-three year old boy friend.

RAIN
But that's not serious.

GABE
No?

RAIN
No.

GABE
Hey, this is a crazy conversation. I admit I did have some ideas along these lines but when faced with the reality --

RAIN
How disappointing.

GABE
What?

RAIN
You couldn't ask for a more romantic moment. My twenty-first birthday, we're up here in a storm, the lights are out --
(she opens terrace doors)
wind and rain sweeping the New York skyline.

GABE
Why do I hear eighty-five thousand dollars of psychotherapy dialing 911?

RAIN
I'm teasing you -- because I've had too much to drink too.

Pause.

GABE
You want a romantic birthday kiss? C'mere.

Takes her astonishingly out on terrace. The two are in a blinding downpour. He kisses her. They are locked in a passionate kiss with thunder and lightning crashing.

CUT TO: Gabe, int.

GABE
All I could think of was -- please don't let me get hit by lightning. I mean I was crazy about her and this moment cried out to be played -- all my writer's instinct and theatricality ... That was the place to grab her and kiss her ... but shit, I was scared. The lightning was bouncing all over the place ... we were high up ... we could have blown off the terrace in that gale.

CUT TO: Judy and Larry in midst of a fight in his apt. Outside the hurricane gets worse.

LARRY
Leave me be! I don't want to spend Sunday together because I need some time alone!

JUDY
I'm certainly not pushing you.

LARRY
Yes -- yes you are -- in a quiet, steady way! You're always under foot -- always there for me -- "supportive" is your word -- understanding. Stop being so understanding! It's unbecoming.

JUDY
I'm doing the best I can considering you have no feelings for me.

LARRY
I'm sorry -- I'm sick of your constant put upon, sacrificing, victim personality. I still think a lot about Sally. I still have feelings for her -- feelings that I don't think I could ever have for you.

Weeping, wrecked, she grabs her coat clumsily and runs out. He tries to stop her.

LARRY (contd)
Judy! Judy!

She's gone.

LARRY (contd)
Oh God! What did I do!? Judy!

Runs after her -- blinding rain -- catches up with her.

LARRY (contd)
I'm sorry! I'm sorry!

JUDY
I never want to see you again!

LARRY
Don't say that! I need you!

JUDY
It's good to know how you feel!

LARRY
But I don't feel that way. I'm just upset! I care for you!

JUDY
You're selfish and self-centered and if my behavior is unbecoming, your pining away for Sally is nauseating.

LARRY
I'm sorry! I'm sorry! Please! I didn't mean it! You're right about the way I've acted -- it is nauseating. Please! -- you've been so important to me!

JUDY
Forget it!

LARRY
Please -- Judy! Don't give up on me. I didn't mean those things! Let me take them back.

JUDY
Why did you say them if you didn't mean them!? I think it's exactly what you mean.

LARRY
I'm confused! I'm not myself. I care for you deeply -- probably so deeply that it frightens me and I set up obstacles --

JUDY
Oh bullshit.

LARRY
I know that's it. I'm afraid of my feelings for you. All I know is I didn't mean what I said! Give me one chance to prove it.

She relents a bit.

LARRY (contd)
Oh God -- I'll never hurt you again. I don't deserve you. I'll make it up to you. Please -- please ...

CUT TO: Jack and Sally in bed. Storm rages outside Sneeden's house.

SALLY
Listen to that wind howl. Did you close all the windows?

JACK
Yes. Lucky we fixed that leak in the den. It'd be flooded by now.

SALLY
I know it's crazy but after all these years I'm still scared of thunder -- any loud noise ...

JACK
It would have been madness to use our theatre tickets tonight. We'd be swerving all over the road.

SALLY
I was happy staying in.

JACK
Me too.

SALLY
When we were separated, this is the kind of night that would have terrified me. I'm scared enough as it is sleeping alone.

JACK
Sometimes you can be more alone when you're with somebody.

SALLY
Do you think we should have offered the other two tickets to Gabe or Judy? I mean we bought them for them.

JACK
Yeah but the situation's different now.

SALLY
Right ...

The wind howls, the rain beats down, they lie in bed.

Eventually WE CUT TO the rain as it pours down hard and WE FADE OUT and then UP again a long time later on a nice day on the upper west side.

INT. V.O.
A year later much had occurred. Judy was divorced and remarried to Larry.

CUT TO: Them, int.

INT.
Are you happy?

JUDY
Yes ... things have gone smoothly. Larry puts up with my idiosyncrasies.

LARRY
It's she that tolerates mine.

CUT TO: David, int.

DAVID
I told you she's a passive-aggressive. Somehow she gets what she wants -- she wanted me -- she wanted Gabe -- she wanted the job at the magazine -- out of her marriages -- she wanted Larry ...

CUT TO: Larry, int.

LARRY
I disagree. When Sally went back to her husband I made a big play for Judy. Not at first, but when I decided, I went after her.

JUDY
Gee I hope I didn't quietly push -- I wanted it to work, it's true ...

CUT TO: Jack and Sally, int.

JACK
We're doing fine -- we've learned to tolerate one another's problems more.

SALLY
And that there's more to love than just romance and passion ... There's mutual understanding and companionship ... a buffer against the loneliness and terror of the world ...

JACK
Yes, these things are important ... someone to grow old with ... what kills most people are unreal expectations ...

INT.
And what about things that can't be talked about -- like sexual problems?

SALLY
Unresolved.

INT.
Unresolved?

SALLY
There are some problems that just can't be solved and you have to live with them ... in whatever patchwork thing you construct and sometimes they flair up ...

JACK
They do -- no question -- and then it's hard.

SALLY
But you deal with the moment and then push it back down.

SALLY
Under the rug ...

JACK
Yes -- and yet it kind of works ...

SALLY
You can't force yourself to conform to some abstract definition of love ... or some idealized concept of marriage ... every situation is different ...

JACK
All she's saying is -- whatever works.

SALLY
It's funny -- that night over a year ago when we went over to Gabe and Judy Roth's and announced so flippantly we were splitting -- I was not that confident inside.

JACK
Nor was I.

SALLY
And I remember envying them so and thinking they're so lucky -- they have such a great marriage.

JACK
(arm around her)
It is ironic that we're together and they're not.

CUT TO: Gabe, int.

GABE
I experienced a very romantic moment with Rain -- as you know -- at her twenty-first birthday party -- it brought back many memories -- I felt that old pull ...

CUT BACK TO: Party in dark.

GABE V.O.
And we came in from the downpour and we looked at one another in the dark ...

The lights go on.

GABE V.O. (contd)
And suddenly the lights went on and I thought to myself -- what the hell am I doing here? She's a kid -- a crazy kid -- have I really learned nothing over the years?

GABE
(live to Rain)
That was a very passionate moment but I don't think we should follow it up.

RAIN
Meaning?

GABE
Meaning if this were years ago -- you're so tempting and so lovely -- but I know how it ends.

RAIN
You sure?

GABE
Sure enough.

RAIN
Ok -- if that's the way you want it.
(and she's off)

CUT TO: Gabe, int.

GABE
And I walked out into the pouring rain.

CUT TO: He's left party, in streets in hurricane.

GABE V.O.
At first I headed instinctively back to my apartment ... I wanted to hold Judy and kiss her -- and then I realized -- I really blew it ... I could have been home with her now and not out in this stupid hurricane which was not romantic but wet and dangerous ...

CUT TO: Gabe, int.

GABE
I mean what did it mean she resembled Harriet who I once loved -- she looked like her -- remember? That's what prompted me to go over and talk with her that day in East Hampton ...

And I remember I was so relieved she wasn't crazy like Harriet because I'd just had such a bad breakup with a woman like her ... And yet part of me was disappointed ... Poor Judy was fighting an uphill battle with me all the way ... I never really gave her a chance ... I always had this gnawing disappointment that she was a little too sober -- too straight -- but it wasn't so ... She was perfectly fine for me if I had just let it happen ...

I'm such a fool when I think of it ... and yet there was a part of me strong enough to ask her to marry me ...

INT.
What's your life like now?

GABE
Now I've kind of taken myself out of the race ... It's only temporary -- till I can focus a little more ... I don't want to hurt anybody and certainly not get hurt ... Undoubtedly one day soon I'll get tired of my isolation and I'll feel the need for companionship and get out there and try again.
(MORE)

GABE (contd)
Finding out about yourself is a very hard job because the one who hides and the one who searches is the same person ... no wonder it's so tough ...

Meanwhile I don't mind living alone. I have friends. I still teach but I'm writing more. Working on a novel ... not my old one ... a different type ...

INT.
In what way different?

GABE
I don't know -- less confessional -- more political.
(notices time, rises)
Hey -- is this over?

END